Developing authenticity:

A framework to enhance women's well-being in a male-dominated work environment

by

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DECLARATION

I, Rochelle Dorothy Jacobs, with student number 42750830, declare that **"Developing authenticity: A framework to enhance women's well-being in a male-dominated work environment"** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SUMMARY

This study's primary objective was to create a framework for developing authenticity, by exploring women's experiences of authenticity and how these relate to their well-being in a male-dominated work environment. Twelve purposively chosen women participated in the study, comprising six police officers and six traffic officers from the Western Cape province in South Africa. Data were gathered through narrative interviews by using open-ended questions, and analysed by applying thematic analysis. The research findings revealed that challenges or stressors in their law enforcement environment serve as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self in the authenticity dynamic, resulting in the need for coping and therefore for developing authenticity.

The framework for developing authenticity was constructed as an ongoing and unfolding process comprising the following: experiencing challenges or stressors; turning within; recognising possible ways of being; managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour; making conscious choices and taking responsible actions; as well as evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards. During this process various best-self characteristics and associated skills are developed and employed, but also serve as best-self standards against which to evaluate growth and transformation. Secondary objectives aimed to advance the concept of authenticity in the study of well-being as a discipline of psychology. It

also aimed to make a methodological contribution by applying hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches in a novel way.

KEY TERMS

Authenticity, best-self, coping, well-being, male-dominated work environment, law enforcement, hermeneutic phenomenology, transpersonal research, employee and organisational well-being, career counselling and guidance.

Uphuhliso Lokwenene:

Umgaqo nkqubo wokuphucula intlalo-ntle yabasetyhini emisebenzini elawulwa ngamadoda

Eyona njongo yesisifundo ibikukuphuhlisa umgaqo nkqubo wokwenene, oqwalasela izinto abantu basetyhini abadlule kuzo kwaye nokuba zingqamane njani nentlalo-ntle yabo kwindawo zokusebenza eziphethwe ngamadoda. Ishumi elinesibini labasetyhini elikhethwe ngenjongo, liye lathatha inxaxheba kwesi sifundo, eliquka amapolisa amathandathu kunye namagos'ezendlel'amathandathu, avela kwiphondo Lentshona Koloni eMzantsi Afrika. Kusetyenziswe udliwano ndlebe apho abantu bebe balisa amabali abo, bebuzwa imibuzo efuna impendulo ezingqalileyo ukuqokelela ezinkcukacha kwaye zahlalutywa ngokusebenzisa uhlalutyo oluthile. Uphando lufumanise ukuba imiceli mingeni okanye uxinizelelo lwengqondo kwiimeko zokugunyaziswa komthetho zisebenza njenge arhente zokubasusa ekubeni babalasele kwinguqu yokwenene, nto leyo ebangela kubekho imfuneko yokuba banyamezele kwaye kubekho uhlumo lokwenene.

Umgaqo nkqubo wophuhliso lokwenene wakhiwe njenge nkqubo eqhubekayo equka ezizinto zilandelayo: ukudibana nemiceli mingeni okanye uxinezelelo ngokwase ngqondweni; ukonganyelwa ngaphakathi; ukubona indlela ezinokwenzeka ngayo izinto; ukulawula iingcamango, iingcinga, imvakalelo kunye nendlela yokuziphatha, ukuthatha izigqibo ezi zizo kunye nokuthatha uxanduva lwezenzo zakho; kwaye uphonononge indlela abaphendula ngayo kwakunye

neziphumo ezinxamnye nomgangatho wokuba ubalasele. Ngexesha lalenkqubo iimpawu zakho ezihamba phambili nezohlukeneyo, kunye nezakhono ezinxulumene nazo ziyaphuhliswa kwaye uqashwe, kodwa zikwa ncedisa njenge milinganiselo yokuvavanya ukukhula kunye notshintsho. Iinjongo zesibini zijolise ekuqhubekekiseni lemfundiso yokwenene kwisifundo sentlalo-ntle njenge ngqeqesho yasengqondweni. Kwakhona, kwenzelwe ukwenza igalelo leendlela zokwenza izinto ngokusebenzisa iindlela zophando ngokusebenza kwengqondo yomntu (hermeneutic), kunye nophando lwamava kunye neenkolelo zomntu, ngeedlela ezintsha.

IZINTO EZINGUNDOQO

Izinto zokwenene, ukubalasela, ukunyamezela, intalo-ntle, imisebenzini elawulwa ngamadoda, ukugunyaziswa komthetho, uphando olo lulo ngokusebenza kwengqondo yomntu, uphando lwamava kunye neenkolelo zomntu, intalo-ntle yomsebenzi kunye neye nkampani, ukucetyiswa kunye nokukhokelwa emsebenzini.

Ontwikkeling van egtheid:

'n Raamwerk om vroue se welstand te verbeter in 'n manlik-gedomineerde werksomgewing

Die primêre doel van hierdie studie was om 'n raamwerk vir die ontwikkeling van egtheid te skep, deur vroue se ervarings van egtheid te ondersoek en hoe dit verband hou met hul welstand in 'n manlik-gedomineerde werksomgewing. Twaalf doelgerig gekose vrouens het deelgeneem aan die studie, wie bestaan het uit ses polisiebeamptes en ses verkeersbeamptes uit die Wes-Kaapse provinsie in Suid-Afrika. Data was versamel deur middel van narratiewe onderhoude deur oop vrae te gebruik, en ontleed deur tematiese analise toe te pas. Die navorsingsbevindings het aan die lig gebring dat uitdagings of stressors in hul wetstoepassingsomgewing as potensiële agente dien om die self weg te beweeg van die beste-self in die egtheid dinamika, wat die behoefte aan *coping* tot gevolg het en dus vir die ontwikkeling van egtheid.

Die raamwerk vir die ontwikkeling van egtheid is saamgestel as 'n deurlopende en ontvouende proses wat die volgende insluit: ervaring van uitdagings of stressors; keer na binne; erkenning van moontlike maniere om te wees; hantering van persepsies, gedagtes, emosies en gedrag; maak bewustelike keuses en neem verantwoordelike aksies; sowel as die evaluering van reaksies en gevolge teen die beste-self standaarde. Gedurende hierdie proses word verskeie beste-self eienskappe en verwante vaardighede ontwikkel en aangewend, maar dien ook as die beste-self standaarde om groei en transformasie te evalueer. Sekondêre doelwitte het ten doel om die konsep van egtheid in die studie van welstand as dissipline van sielkunde te bevorder. Dit is ook daarop gemik om 'n metodologiese bydrae te lewer deur hermeneutiese fenomenologiese en transpersoonlike benaderings op 'n nuwe manier toe te pas.

SLEUTEL TERME

Egtheid, beste-self, *coping*, welstand, manlik-gedomineerde werksomgewing, wetstoepassing, hermeneutiese fenomenologie, transpersoonlike navorsing, werknemer- en organisatoriese welstand, beroepsvoorligting en leiding.

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CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ménard and Brunet (2011) stated that managing stress in organisations is a growing problem, and authenticity ought to be encouraged as a way of advancing employee well-being in this context. More specifically, they studied well-being at work in managers and reported that authenticity entailed individuals being themselves when in these roles. However, literature lacks clear definitions on what authenticity means (Lehman, Kovács & Carrol, 2018; Vannini, 2006) and how it is developed (Cooper, Scandura & Schriesheim, 2005; Kreber, Klampfleitner, McCune, Bayne & Knottenbelt, 2007), while different conceptualisations are used in research to understand authenticity (Knoll, Meyer, Kroemer & Schröder-Abé, 2015; Koydemir, Şimşek, Kuzgun & Schütz, 2018; Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018). Furthermore, Kreuzbauer and Keller (2017) regard such conceptualisations as too general for the complex phenomenon of authenticity.

Being human entails using one's intentions and personality responses as vehicles toward developing authenticity and ultimately, toward coping and well-being (Zukav, 2001). Such responses must therefore be in line with one's true self, the inner voice that provides direction to, and forms part of an authority external to self (Norton, 1976). In addition, understandings of authentic human existence are likely to produce aspects of a spiritual nature (Hiles, 2002) that may also be essential in coping with challenging work-life circumstances. Women are exposed to unique work-life challenges that affect their stress and coping behaviour, especially in attempting to respond to demands in male-dominated occupations (Löve, Hagberg & Dellve, 2011). I was intrigued by women coping in a male-dominated work environment and authenticity as a potential resource in the well-being dynamic. Therefore, in this study I elected to explore and understand how women develop authenticity by integrating a hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal methodological approach. The ultimate intention for employing these methodologies was to create a framework for developing authenticity, to improve their coping capacity and enhance their well-being in a male-

dominated work environment. Coping involves the ability to adapt, and Fleeson and Wilt (2010) argue how flexible behaviour at times indicates enhanced authenticity. Accordingly, it is the consequences of particular ways of behaving that determine if something is experienced as more or less authentic.

In this chapter I present the rationale to the study. I provide the background and motivation in relation to the importance of well-being and authenticity for women in the workplace – especially work environments of a traditionally male-dominated nature. The need for the study is further highlighted through the problem statement and its direction provided through formulating the objectives to this research. Thereafter, the significance of the study is again considered within its specific disciplinary context. The remainder of this chapter introduces issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations that were already deliberated in the study's planning phase. I conclude by providing the chapter outline to the thesis.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

I was particularly drawn to exploring how authenticity is developed in women – as a novel way of enhancing their well-being in the workplace. My personal experiences have drawn me to invest in authenticity as a research phenomenon, and women in law enforcement as a research context. In this section the rationale is provided for selecting this research topic and I reflect on the envisioned value of the study. Justification is given for studying well-being in the workplace and authenticity is presented as a key component of well-being. Thereafter, the need to study women in specifically a male-dominated work environment is discussed. In particular, law enforcement is established as a traditionally male-dominated work environment, and as an exceptionally stressful one. The need to study women's authenticity in relation to well-being, in the context of law enforcement, is therefore explained as well as how my personal interest in this study evolved. Since the researcher fulfils a primary role in qualitative studies (Terre Blanche, Kelly & Durrheim, 2006), I discuss my impact on the study in section 1.2.4 and continue to reflect on it frequently in the thesis where of relevance.

1.2.1 Well-being, authenticity and its importance in the world of work

Well-being comprises general health, life or non-work satisfactions and/or dissatisfactions experienced, and work or job-related satisfactions (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Well-being encompasses relations that are positive, personal growth, self-acceptance, living lives with purpose, autonomy, mastering one's environment and self-acceptance (Ryff & Singer, 2008). When it comes to spiritual well-being, meaning making experiences are central to human well-being, and an understanding of life as purposeful is particularly important (DuBose, 2010b). Individuals' subjective well-being is influenced by personality (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999) that links to behavioural patterns and emotional reactions (Elovainio & Kivimäki, 2009). Emotions are also significant to career well-being, and come into play when constructing or responding to important career experiences (Kidd, 2008). Career well-being considers the attitudes, processes and events that contribute to careers going well, such as good work relationships with supervisors and colleagues (Kidd, 2008). In the context of this study, well-being involves the cognitive, physical, affective and spiritual self, as well as the social processes that enable people to live well (Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003) and develop their best potentials (Waterman et al., 2010). Well-being is important in the workplace as it influences performance, other related organisational outcomes (Cotton & Hart, 2003) and is positively influenced by the ability to cope (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Well-being is further significant because the organisational setting itself influences the physical, behavioural and psychological outcomes of employees – all impacting work performance (Nzonzo, 2017).

Therefore, researchers are particularly interested in employee well-being and ways of preventing occupational stress, to the extent that substantial research has been conducted in this field (Cotton & Hart, 2003). Well-being brings about subjective, positive outcomes such as longevity and better income (Diener, Kesebir & Lucas, 2008). Ryff and Singer (2008) stated that well-being leads to outcomes such as positive relationships and personal growth, and described its association with healthy individuals, families and communities. Cotton and Hart (2003) have shown that occupational stress indicators have linkages with employee and organisational performance outcomes. These include morale, employee turnover, sickness and

absenteeism, compensation claims from workers, poor service delivery and related complaints. Hence, occupational stress and the work environment influence health and the performance of duties (Nzonzo, 2017). Negative stressors or negative work experiences may cause negative responses to stress (Cotton & Hart, 2003). I concur with Cotton and Hart (2003) that people's perceptions regarding stress experiences relate to low levels or an absence of positive emotional states and positive work experiences. For this reason, as well as the importance of well-being in the workplace as discussed earlier, I was drawn to the focus of this study. In addition, well-being has been, and still is, important in my own life as well, given what I have experienced being a woman in law enforcement. Coming from a male-dominated work environment, I experienced it as extremely challenging to be my best or authentic self throughout. At the same time, however, it was shaping my best-self that enabled me to cope and enhance my well-being. Such experiences contributed to my interest in how to develop authenticity, which has been and remains to be of personal value to me. For these reasons, I also consider my bias relating to interpretations and findings later (e.g., section 1.2.4).

Organisational behaviour researchers are intrigued about authenticity within the context of work, as it is a significant aspect of well-being (cf. Ariza-Montes, Giorgi, Leal-Rodríguez & Ramírez-Sobrino, 2017; Barnard, Schurink & De Beer, 2008; Carson & Langer, 2006; Erickson, 1995; Kernis, 2003; Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018). Positive associations have been noted between authenticity and well-being (Ménard & Brunet, 2011), the significance of which has been discussed. However, descriptions around authentic functioning are often unclear. Authenticity has been observed to be important in healthy interpersonal and psychological functioning, since it affects aspects such as coping styles, general well-being, verbal-defensiveness, self-concept and self-esteem (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Accordingly, authenticity has its disadvantages in that awareness of one's limitations can be painful, intense emotional encounters may unsettle people, and self-reflection may increase unpleasant emotions. However, Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) found that affective consequences have a purpose, as they convey the experience of authenticity into one's conscious awareness. Carson and Langer (2006) explained how awareness or mindfulness involves self-acceptance. The focus is on exploring the particular situation, as opposed to self-criticism, so that

self-esteem is not negatively affected by comparing the self to others. Mindfulness is an important component of authenticity (Carson & Langer, 2006) that links to the ability to manage anxieties successfully (Mayer, Tonelli, Oosthuizen & Surtee, 2018) and contributes to well-being (Cash & Whittingham, 2010). Human beings have various cognitive abilities (Puchert, Dodd & Viljoen, 2017) and emotional intelligence is another essential aspect of living a life of authenticity. In conjunction with authentic leadership, emotional intelligence contributes to managing conflict, reduced stress and meaningful relationships (McGrath, 2013). According to Satre, creating meaning in life is a central challenge to living a life of authenticity and later in life, purpose may turn in the direction of emotional integration (Ryff & Singer, 2008).

In light of the above, well-being is key to positive work-life outcomes and authenticity is related to well-being through key intrapersonal processes such as mindfulness, self-awareness and meaning making. Next, the need for continued research on women in a male-dominated work environment is discussed.

1.2.2 An inquiry into women in a male-dominated work environment

The need for this research is contextually rooted in the exceptional challenges encountered by women in male-dominated professions (Blackmore, 2017), who require unique coping strategies to persevere (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Women's workforce participation increased globally over the last 30 years, partly due to legislation advocating equal job opportunities (Botha & Cronje, 2015). For example, the *Employment Equity Act* (55 of 1998) was created to correct historical discriminatory practices and to ensure that the South African workforce reflects the composition of the country's population. Within this Act the term *designated groups* includes women, in relation to whom the constitutional right to equality must be ensured. However, women still encounter distinct challenges in male-dominated professions (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015; Mayer et al., 2018). They battle discriminatory issues such as gender discrimination (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Morrison, 2004), manifesting through aspects such as sexual harassment (Fassinger, 2008) and limited opportunities for career advancement (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015). The combination of gender-hostile work environments and demanding labour intensive work activates mental and

physical stress (Martin & Barnard, 2013). The increasing number of females in the modern-day labour force therefore poses challenges to employees as well as employers (England, 2010).

From a systems perspective, on the one hand, women battle unfavourable organisational practices that support gender discrimination and prejudice (Martin & Barnard, 2013). Organisational challenges include insufficient consideration for women's physical and identity needs, their work-life balance and inadequate talent management (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015; Martin & Barnard, 2013). Women also have a constant struggle in the workplace regarding a lack of mentors, especially female mentors (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015). With regard to an individual perspective, on the other hand, gender differences may influence psychological well-being, given people's unique needs to self-actualise and reach their full potential (Roothman et al., 2003). Experiences of well-being affect individuals' work-life (Zhang, Chen, Schlegel & Hicks, 2018) and seep into their private lives (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Where career women still value the conventional role of mother, they integrate various life roles by postponing marriage and motherhood to build a career (Franks, Schurink & Fourie, 2006). Accordingly, once they became mothers, women prefer more flexible working hours and value their family support systems while raising children. Löve et al. (2011) described how the challenge of finding balance in their daily lives creates enormous stress, so that women in male-dominated environments may resort to dysfunctional coping behaviour. This behaviour may include taking on more work than they can handle, neglecting one's health and constantly comparing oneself against external standards (Löve et al., 2011).

Certain career crises are also more likely to distress women than men, such as decisions regarding family and raising children (Fassinger, 2008). As alluded to, career women's family responsibilities may lead to role overload (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016). Managing multiple life roles require energy, time and resources that progressively create associated stress (Franks et al., 2006). Women perceive themselves to be more exposed to stressful situations than their male counterparts (Löve et al., 2011). Accordingly, their work experiences and coping responses manifest uniquely, given the treatment within their male-dominated environments. For example, they may face

discrimination from employers for having to attend to family needs, and be thought of as unable to make neutral decisions given their caring nature (Chen, 2015). They may also find it more difficult to achieve similar success than men (Blackmore, 2017). Adapting to challenges may see women resort to femininity, innate motivational characteristics, using mentors and acquiring male qualities (Martin & Barnard, 2013) such as aggressiveness (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015). However, authenticity proves essential toward understanding adaptive characteristics pertaining to optimal self-esteem in individuals (Kernis, 2003). Therefore, one may anticipate that reverting to such mechanisms as the development of male qualities (Mayer et al., 2018), may not be furthering to the journey of a woman who seeks to live life authentically. This study was intended to broaden existing knowledge on adjustment and coping of female employees in a traditionally male-dominated work environment, by specifically focussing on the role authenticity plays in this regard.

1.2.3 Exploring women's well-being in the context of law enforcement

Effecting positive gender transformation in the law enforcement sector has been rather slow (Morrison, 2004). In general, the South African Police Service (SAPS) remains male-dominated (Chen 2015), even though statistics from 1995 (Newham, Masuku & Dlamini, 2006) to 2015 indicate an increasing number of females joining the service (South African Police Service, 2015). The Western Cape Government, Department of Community Safety, recorded progress in their Employment Equity Plan from 2012 to 2017, but noted that challenges still exist in aspects such as gender equality and the empowerment of women (SA, Western Cape Government [WCG], 2012). Provincial Traffic is part of this department and similarly still needs to attend to the gender distribution of their workforce, bearing in mind women's challenges. Law enforcement is therefore a traditionally male-dominated work environment and particularly taxing to female employees' well-being.

A lot of research focus on the coping, well-being and related challenges, including career limitations for women in traditionally male-dominated work environments. Within these contexts, some studies have focussed on women within higher education (Löve et al., 2011), while others placed emphasis on specific career contexts such as

engineering (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015) and mining (Botha & Cronje, 2015). Some researchers included various occupations in their study (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Mostert, 2009). Closer to the context of the current study, the stress experienced by women in police services was also taken into consideration (Chen, 2015). In South Africa, research on occupational stress often investigates coping in police officers and includes both genders (cf. Madu & Poodhun, 2006; Pienaar, Rothmann & Van De Vijver, 2007; Rothmann, 2008). Attention has also been given to police officers (both genders) who incorporate religion and spiritual resources in their coping strategies (Joubert & Grobler, 2013; Pienaar & Rothmann, 2003).

Hence, coping and well-being have been regarded as an important study focus in the context of law enforcement. Specific to the category of traffic law enforcement, attention has been given to stress related issues of traffic officers (Pienaar, 2007; Van Heerden, 1990). More recently, Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2017) explored traffic officers' spirituality as a way of coping within their South African context, but not specific to women. This suggests the need for continued research on women's well-being in this context. The tempo of change toward attending to women's challenges in the workplace has been sluggish (Lewis-Enright, Crafford & Crous, 2009). Women's unique well-being needs require the development of novel coping methods (Sharf, 2010) given the significance of well-being within the workplace. Hence, although various researchers emphasise the importance of well-being in law enforcement, none of them have focussed on how women in particular develop authenticity. Also, none of them focus on how women use authenticity to cope and enhance their well-being in these work environments. This situation underscores the need to study women's authenticity as a means of coping in the law enforcement context, to enhance their well-being.

Therefore, this research was carried out with women in law enforcement sectors, specifically South African Police Service and Traffic Services. These workplaces present unique characteristics inherent to their work environments. Characteristics include working with violence and crime, performing roles and responsibilities regulated by law (*Criminal Procedure Act,* 1977), being presented with risky, dangerous and potentially harmful situations (Chen, 2015; Mushwana, 1998; Smith &

Charles, 2010), as well as stressful work environments (Anderson, Litzenberger & Plecas, 2002; Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017). It is necessary to study the well-being of these women, because their work environments expose them to psychological and physical demands that may challenge their ability to cope and to live well (Lazarus, 1993; Roothman et al., 2003; Ryan, Rapley & Dziurawiec, 2014).

1.2.4 How my interest in this research evolved

Self-reflection is an important strategy to enhance the rigour of qualitative inquiry (Kitto, Chesters & Grbich, 2008; Koch & Harrington, 1998), and in which the topic explored transforms the researcher's understanding and life (Anderson, 2004; Iosifides, 2018). In explicating the rationale of a particular study, as is the intention here, self-reflection makes transparent the research decisions taken by the researcher in terms of the focus and scope of a study. In being thus transparent (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Miller, 2008), I acknowledge my bias in this study and agree with Copp (2008) and Kafle (2011) that no scientific inquiry can be purely objective. As such, it is valuable to you as a reader to understand how I became interested in this topic and how my background influenced the choice of the particular research setting. My journey with this doctorate study is closely tied to the route my career followed through the law enforcement sector, and my well-being and coping experiences as a woman in this regard.

Being a woman of colour, I was the first female traffic officer to join the particular station. More women were only appointed much later. Consequently, I was the first and only female at that time to serve in senior positions. Being qualified as a municipal police officer as well as traffic officer, I served for ten years as the latter in my previous career. I am also qualified as an *examiner for driving licences* and an *examiner of vehicles*, and I performed duties as the former when required. I made the most of the rapid promotion policy of the given employer by means of tertiary education. As a result, I rapidly advanced into senior positions, although my motivation for continued studies was never just to acquire a senior position *per se.* The real reason was that I wanted to get away from the duty of issuing fines to transgressors – the part of my job I enjoyed the least. Also, I got married. So I was delighted about my advancement, as it meant less time on the road and more time for a private life. It also boosted my

confidence, seeing that I was on top of my work and always wanted to learn more. Further, it allowed me more options within the road safety environment. My duties required me to engage with other police officials. Due to my personal challenges, I was interested in the workplace journeys of women in similar environments. Seeing that my rapid promotion was a reason for several of the challenges I experienced, I frequently experienced threats to my well-being.

Incidents that have led to this situation included adverse reaction and non-acceptance of my authority from certain colleagues, disciplinary actions and eventual dismissal. Although the dismissal was eventually settled and I was reinstated, the prolonged proceedings drained me physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. I did everything I possibly could under the circumstances and, being of Christian faith, the rest I left to God. It was while going through a strenuous disciplinary process that I attended a church service to rejuvenate my spiritual resources. I had an experience which, although it was years ago, to this day still feels as if it happened only yesterday. I presented myself to be prayed for and put out my hands, palms upward, as I usually do when I open myself up to be blessed with what may be requested in the prayer. I remember very clearly being in a state of complete surrender. I remember standing, slightly swaying back and forth. The swaying I was in control of. My eyes were closed. Then I felt as though my feet lifted from the ground. I do not know whether or not that actually happened, but I do remember that I felt *light* – as if I was levitating. I fell backward, although I did not experience it as a rapid fall – it rather felt as if I were a snowflake falling from the sky in slow motion – over that I had no control and there was nothing I could do to prevent falling. I had no sense of time or space or where I was. I just remember vividly the feelings associated with whatever was happening to me. It was a sublime state – peaceful; a state of tremendous love and trust; a state in which I felt that, no matter what, everything will work out fine. I do not know how long it lasted for, or exactly how it ended, but during that experience I was literally flat on the floor, although I did not feel it when I hit the floor. After the service, a man who was standing on my left in the church, told me that the person never came around to pray for him directly, or to administer the laying on of hands on him. He said that he too *fell down* when his right side touched me while I was being prayed for.

Later, during tremendously stressful times at work, this experience elicited such beautiful feelings in me of who I am and of being true to myself. I realised that whatever *source* I was connected to during that experience, must have been sublime and authentic. I can still recall these feelings into my being, whenever I want to, or need these to deal with challenges. The sense of authenticity in particular stuck with me. The experience inspired in me an interest to read more about well-being. Whilst doing so, conceptual reading on developing authenticity resonated with me and the experience I had. Insights gained sparked further interest in what the process entails for myself, as a woman, to be authentic in the workplace.

I also observed how other women (and men) in the law enforcement environment overcome their difficulties. Some of them dealt with demands in the workplace better than others, while some could not deal with challenges at all. I concluded that there had to be better ways of overcoming challenges and deal with other human beings in the workplace – even totally different to what I may have been taught within the organisational culture. I am using the term *human beings*, because in the law enforcement environment people often forget that officers are also human beings. The fact that they wear uniforms does not mean that they do not have emotions and needs like all other people. All these experiences contributed to me becoming an Industrial and Organisational (IO) Psychologist, for which I started studying while working in the traffic services. My studies also became a method of coping with the stress at work, because by focusing on my goals, I was also engaged in self-actualisation. I wanted to be in a position where I could guide employees to avoid the pitfalls so that they would not have to endure what I had to; and if they do end up in the same unfortunate situation, I would help them to deal with these obstacles in a healthy manner. These intentions link to my passion to assist people to become the best versions of themselves and to understand the connection between their personalities, passions and purpose. Since being a psychologist helps me to do so, I believe my profession allows for the manifestation of my authentic self.

Given my experiences described, I now believe that all my life encounters, no matter how challenging, constantly provided me with opportunities to live and create my best possible life at each moment. Even now, in terms of academia, this research paper is

an avenue to being my best-self and a possibility that arose from those challenges. Heidegger stated that things can only be known through considering our preunderstandings (DuBose, 2010a), which we constantly broaden (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004) as we broaden our horizons (Gadamer, 1975/2004; Heidegger, 1953/1996). If understanding is dependent on the horizons of experiences or knowledge attained up to each point, then I can recognise the influence of my experiences on my way of thinking about aspects related to this study. My work-life experiences relate not only to the focus of the study, but also to the specific methodology I had chosen for this thesis. As it consistently directed my reading to enlighten my own well-being, my experiences had a direct impact on the conceptual framework that was constructed in this study and which I elaborate on later.

In terms of career, I doubt that I would have experienced the relentless drive to qualify as a psychologist, had it not been for my most difficult moments along my life and career path. A spiritual leader once told me that the more forgiveness and mercy we have received from God for our own disobedience, the more we feel the need to give back to others as well. I can live with that.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

An increasing number of women enter male-dominated work settings and they face unique challenges regarding their well-being in the work environment. Consequently, the need exists for novel ways to address the way they cope and maintain their well-being. Research has highlighted several well-being barriers women encounter while working in these environments. These include gender discrimination (Morrison, 2004), negative attitudes from clients as well as conflict (Pienaar, 2007; Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006) and demanding work hours (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017; Mushwana, 1998). Authenticity is an essential construct spanning various perspectives on well-being (Kernis, 2003; Klenke, 2007; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). Therefore, authenticity presents a unique perspective to exploring how developing and experiencing authenticity may relate to enhancing women's coping and well-being. Limited research is available on authenticity as a construct (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014). Authenticity is of interest in this study, because the way in which employees cope with

emotional job requirements is rooted in their management of feelings and expressions of emotions (Hülsheger, Lang & Maier, 2010). This may especially be true, since women have been reported to adopt characteristics and strategies not particular to women, to cope with their work environments (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015; Martin & Barnard, 2013).

The core problem statement of this study therefore poses the need to understand how women in law enforcement develop authenticity, as a way of coping and maintaining their well-being. Studies on aspects of women's well-being have been context specific. Limited research has been done pertaining to well-being in law enforcement within the South African context. This study was aimed at filling the gap in research through its conceptualisation of authenticity as core to well-being, and by fulfilling the need to understand how women employed in law enforcement are coping with the demands on their well-being. By understanding the behavioural mechanisms required for developing authenticity, psychologists can help individuals to develop and employ constructive coping strategies and to optimise their well-being. Hence, the research question entailed "How do women in a traditionally male-dominated work context such as law-enforcement, develop authenticity in maintaining their well-being?"

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study was intended to achieve primary as well as secondary objectives.

1.4.1 Primary objective

This research primarily aimed to create a framework for developing authenticity, by exploring how women in law enforcement experience developing authenticity, in relation to their well-being.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The study was further intended to:

- Advance the concept of authenticity in the study of well-being within the discipline of I/O psychology.
- Make a methodological contribution by applying hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches in an integrative and novel way.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY IN ITS DISCIPLINARY CONTEXT

Since ancient times psychology has been understood as a science of the soul, with soul and psyche viewed as more or less the same by numerous depth psychologists (Corbett, 2010). Psychology involves the scientific study of living beings' minds and behaviour (Moss III, 2010). Mind denotes internal processes and states such as thoughts and emotions that cannot be observed directly – to be inferred from behavioural responses that are measurable and observable (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2011). My research is located in the discipline of I/O psychology – that is "general psychology applied in industry and organisations" (Strümpfer, 2007, p. 1), or studying people's behaviour in the workplace (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011). The significance of the study lies in its objectives, being the novel way in which authenticity is explored within the context of well-being, a core field of research located within the discipline of I/O psychology. The study demonstrates how research methods are applied in the discipline of industrial psychology – by employing hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches in a unique manner (see Chapter Four, section 4.7). The findings are of relevance particularly to the sub-disciplines of employee and organisational well-being as well as career counselling and guidance.

Well-being itself has been introduced in this chapter (see section 1.2). Employee and organisational well-being aims to achieve optimal positive human functioning and adjusting well to the demands of life (May, 2009). Accordingly, a more balanced approach to well-being is required that involves managing problems in the workplace and workers, while also encouraging positive resources in both. I wanted to explore authenticity as such a positive resource, and how becoming authentic may help women deal better with the challenges inherent to their work environments. The framework can be applied to help bring about optimal performance and organisational outcomes

(Lyubovnikova, Legood, Turner & Mamakouka, 2017), by helping individuals cope better with the adverse effects of work stress (Cummings & Worley, 2005).

Career counselling and guidance involves choosing an occupation and adjusting to it (Sharf, 2010). It also addresses adjusting to work-related choices, interplay between work and different life roles, clarifying important self-characteristics, coping with colleagues and supervisors, job stress and demands, as well as career transitions (Amundson, Harris-Bowlsbey & Niles, 2009). Within the workplace, the services of career therapy help clients to form a vocational identity that is personally meaningful and attends to emotional distress of clients, while career coaching includes adjusting intelligently to challenges posed by occupational positions (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Hence, the framework may be useful to help individuals find direction and meaning to their lives and to bring about adjustment to career choices made.

1.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Trustworthiness and ethical obligations are imperative to the quality of research. Trustworthiness is built into a study through including elements of transparency in research procedures, ensuring that research is conducted with methodological rigour and based on clear evidence (Yin, 2011). Trustworthiness is considered through aspects of transferability, dependability and confirmability (Given & Saumure, 2008), as well as credibility (Yin, 2011). Detailed discussions of what I did to ensure these terms of trustworthiness are provided in Chapter Four. Scholarly research is also governed by ethical principles and rules (Creswell, 2009) and were adhered to during all aspects of this research process. The ethical considerations dealt with, to protect participant rights, are detailed in the informed consent form that was developed for this purpose (Annexure B). A thorough description of how compliance with the ethical requirements was ensured, is also presented in Chapter Four (see section 4.10).

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In this section I discuss the layout of chapters in this study. The layout is visually depicted in figure 1.1 at the end of this chapter. It reflects the research journey

undertaken, the logical process flow from one element in the research to the other and my way of thinking about how I structured my thesis. Each chapter influences the next one (solid arrows) and *examples* are given (dashed arrows) of how they influence each other back and forth as well. They also build on each other in that Chapter Two is influenced by Chapter One, while Chapter Three is influenced by all the preceding chapters, and so forth. This also reflects the broadening of my horizons in terms of knowledge and perspectives attained. For example, the philosophical foundations (e.g., Chapter Two) influence the methodology (Chapter Three) and also the research design (Chapter Four), which reflects the philosophical assumptions in previous chapters. The methodology (Chapter Three) required reflection on theory (e.g., Chapter Two) that in itself informed the background and motivation (Chapter One) as well as the findings. Each chapter contributed to the attainment of the research objective(s) and the conclusions (Chapter Seven) are based on the findings (Chapters Five and Six). For this reason, the final chapter embraces all the preceding ones. The final chapter particularly points back to Chapter One in that the study had to fulfil its research objectives, while answering the research question within the context of its background and motivation.

1.8 CONCLUSION

In Chapter One I set out to introduce developing authenticity as a novel way of enhancing women's well-being, in that authenticity may serve as a coping mechanism in a male-dominated work environment. The preliminary literature review produced benefits of authenticity, but the opposing view relating to the downside of authenticity also came to light. The latter, I opine, depends on which definition or conceptualisation of authenticity such view is based upon – especially since it became clear that authenticity in literature lacks a clear definition. I view this in the same manner as I do Heidegger's ontological problem, which he describes as *being* or *reality* not having been clearly defined (Heidegger, 1953/1996). I understand this to mean that, before I can study a *human being*, I must first have established what *being* is. This *being* is not something static according to Heidegger, but a phenomenological process. Similarly, I opine that one is likely to perceive downsides if the *how to get there*, or process of developing authenticity has not yet been articulated clearly.

In this study the definition adopted for authenticity amounts to one's best-self, in that all facets of the self – both positive and negative – have important roles to play when developing authenticity. At this stage I dared to anticipate that it may be the downsides, especially, that have particularly significant roles to play in development toward best-self. This argument clearly also stems from my own well-being experiences. In the context of this study that was carried out in law enforcement, downsides may be viewed as negative or stress responses (i.e., thoughts, emotions, behaviour) to demands posed by the work environment. As argued, however, downsides in this study may be regarded as opportunities for growth, as are the challenges women may face in their world of work. Given related assumptions adopted for understanding human behaviour, growth is an important part of being human and a choice at that. Hence, we can also choose to grow toward authenticity – or to adopt a mode of authentic being – and therefore to enhance our well-being as a result.

Chapter Two follows (after figure 1.1) and includes a thorough literature review.

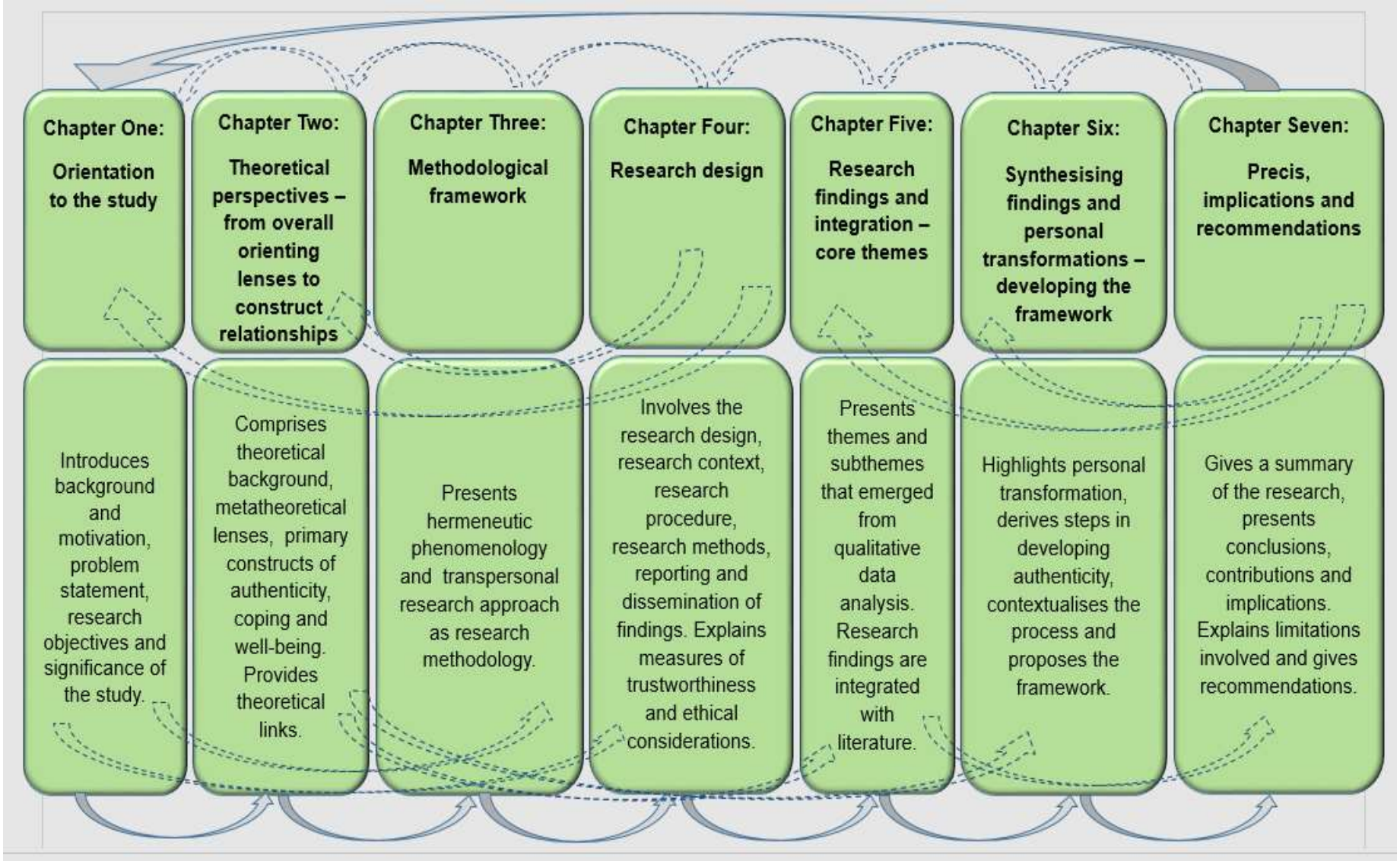


Figure 1.1: Outline of chapters in the study.

CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: FROM OVERALL ORIENTING LENSES TO CONSTRUCT RELATIONSHIPS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two represents the primary literature review, by discussing the theoretical perspectives within which the research was located. As overall perspectives, these enabled me to articulate assumptions adopted and link these to their theoretical foundations (Trafford & Leshem, 2008). The theoretical perspectives also guided my choice of methodological approaches (presented in Chapter Three). Theory and conceptual schemes are ways of accessing the world of participants (Iosifides, 2018), and I applied these here to derive the phenomenon's constituent components (Kelly, 2006c). Theory also shaped the way I perceived the research topic in terms of developing conceptual perspectives (Trafford & Leshem, 2008).

Hence, in this chapter I conceptualise the relevant constructs and establish the theoretical links between them. Together with *authenticity*, the primary constructs in this study were established to be *coping* and *well-being*. They are primary constructs since authenticity was anticipated to serve as a novel coping mechanism through which women's well-being may be enhanced. Related theoretical constructs are also incorporated in this chapter. The research question determined how the literature review was structured (Race, 2008), while the constructs informed the theoretical lenses through which I viewed developing authenticity. Hence, I present the theoretical perspectives by moving from the overall metatheoretical lenses to the constructs of well-being, coping and adjustment, as well as authenticity. The theoretical perspectives are concluded with a rationale for the construct relationships. Their presentation mimics the approach required by the research design (Kelly, 2006c) to understand developing authenticity both within context and in relation to its constituent parts. I elaborate on what I regard as *context* or *whole* and *parts* in this exploration in Chapter Four, section 4.7.2, as part of my research design (see data analysis).

2.2 METATHEORETICAL LENSES

Metatheoretical lenses (figure 2.1) denote overall perspectives selected for their assumptions on how human behaviour can be explained. Multiple perspectives allow a holistic view of human behaviour and experiences (Theron, 2009).

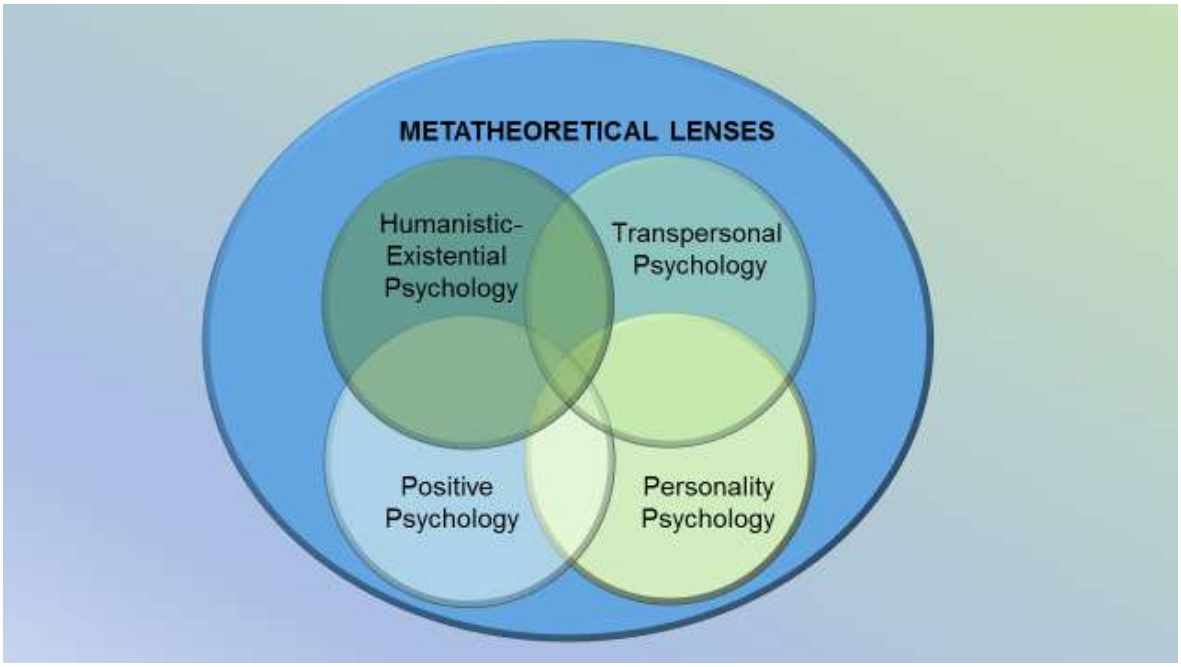


Figure 2.1: Metatheoretical lenses.

The lenses applied here to comprehend data involved relevant perspectives from humanistic-existential psychology, transpersonal psychology, positive psychology and personality psychology.

2.2.1 Humanistic-existential psychology

The “Third Force” in psychology was known as phenomenology in Europe and humanism in the USA (Theron 2009). Humanistic-existential psychologists advocate the psychological value of striving vigorously for connection, purpose and meaningful lives (Spaeth, 2010). Accordingly, psychological health involves moving toward a state of balance, and achieving alignment between perceptions, values and a person’s external reality. Hiles (2002), in his paper for the Old Saybrook 2 Conference, expanded on work by Rollo May and defined the humanistic-existential

paradigm by means of five interdependent themes. I am adding an additional theme, as inspired by the ontology of Heidegger and give it priority as first theme. Heidegger's (1953/1996, p. 42) question is "What is human being?" He does not ask "What is *a* human being" (Hiles, 2002, p. 5). In relation to *Da-Sein,* "The whatness *(essentia)* of this being must be understood in terms of its being *(existentia)*" (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 39). In doing so, he gives priority to the *being* of a being in the world (DeRobertis, 2013). *Da-Sein* as a term does not denote its *what*, but rather its *being*. Hence, Heidegger's ontological question of "What is human being?" serves as overall framework within which I view the five interdependent humanistic-existential questions, as proposed by Hiles' (2002). Heidegger opines that being is authentic or inauthentic, which enables me to view Hiles' questions regarding being human somewhat differently. Now I could focus on what makes a human being authentic or less authentic. The integration of the remaining metatheoretical lenses allows me to see that authentic being is part of a transpersonal journey that involves transformation of personality. This process is ongoing and requires the intention to develop characteristics that will allow the self to become its best. Thus, Heidegger's (1953/1996) notion of focussing on possible ways of being – authentic or inauthentic – as opposed to objectively present beings, was particularly useful to me in this study.

The existential theme examines "What is a human being?" It describes what we can know for sure regarding authentic human existence and asserts that human experience is the root of all knowledge (Hiles, 2002, p. 6; Johnson, 2008). This *self* or *being human* is an ongoing process involving choices made about the world, personal experiences (Bergh, 2009c) and accepting responsibility for how one responds in terms of emotions, decisions, actions and perceptions (Johnson, 2008). The phenomenological theme examines "What is the nature of subjective lived experience?" (Hiles, 2002, p. 6). Accordingly, human consciousness links with intentionality, where thought occurs in relation to one's world, other people and subjects. Persons react to both perceived physical realities and their subjective interpretations of phenomena (Bergh, 2009c). The actualisation theme explores "What is our potential?" as reflected by the work of Maslow (Hiles, 2002, p. 7). It concerns the potential that can be achieved by a person, as well as growth and

developmental objectives. The growth or clinical theme explores “How can we best promote growth and change?” (Hiles, 2002, p. 7). Consequently, Hiles opined that *clinical* in this context entails much broader perspectives than just abnormal psychology or psychoanalysis. The spiritual or transpersonal theme asks “What are we a part of?” It places the human experience in its broadest possible context (Hiles, 2002, p. 8) and moves beyond the self (Tzu, Bannerman & Griffith, 2015).

To direct my way of thinking about the phenomenon, I followed Hiles’ (2002) instruction to consider the five unifying themes (as described above) in a sequential manner. I equate the five themes to component parts of the phenomenon. Further, I situated these within my priority theme, according to which Heidegger (1953/1996) regards “being human” as authentic or inauthentic. My exploration included potentialities of what can be achieved and the promotion of well-being, which occur within the broadest transformational or spiritual context (Hiles, 2002; Ryback, 2011). I also considered individuals’ reactions, emotions, thoughts, interactions and coping methods as these connect to their self-concept – as shaped during the development of their personality (Bergh, 2009c). Authenticity facilitates healthy functioning in that it affects self-concept, self-esteem and coping styles as well as general well-being (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Authenticity requires continuous growth. We grow and change by developing resources that support empowerment, human development and therapeutic practices that are aimed at revealing and eliminating barriers to growth, potential and well-being (Hiles, 2002). Therefore, the theoretical notions underlying the humanistic-existential perspectives in psychology link to developing authenticity. This corresponds with Zhang et al. (2018), who attest that authentic experiences are intricately linked to human existential issues. Many psychological perspectives share assumptions of the Third Force. For example, the transpersonal theme honors transformative human experiences (McCaslin, 2008) and constitutes the next lens applied.

2.2.2 Transpersonal psychology

Transpersonal psychology involves aspects of consciousness, extraordinary experiences and development beyond ego, best potentials and highest possible

transformation (Anderson, 2015; Tzu et al., 2015; Valverde, 2016). Its origins and assumptions are elaborated on in Chapters Three and Four. Transpersonal psychology, which overlaps considerably with humanistic-existential psychology (Spaeth, 2010), is applied to explore aspects beyond the self and the potential for human transformation even further (Diaz, 2010; Hartelius, Caplan & Rardin, 2007). This study journey includes an exploration of myself as the researcher through continuous self-reflection. The potentiality aspect overlaps with the actualisation theme as identified in the previous section. Potentiality links to well-being (Roothman et al., 2003) and well-being has shown associations with authenticity as well as adaptive ways of coping (Waterman et al., 2010). We live in a universe influenced by the subtle energies of each human being (Barratt, 2010), in which spiritual experiences can be used as methods of achieving potential (Diaz, 2010). With spiritual needs being central to human nature, participants' journeys toward self-discovery can be explored and their eventual enhanced adjustment understood (Grof, Friedman, Lukoff & Hartelius, 2008). Another important assumption is that individuals can train their minds toward transpersonal potentials and optimal consciousness (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). To explore this ability, I focussed on ways that individuals use emotions to recognise thoughts and beliefs that hinder their potential, self-expression and coping with challenges (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Emotions are also vital in the positive psychology lens to follow, in which positive emotions receive particular attention.

2.2.3 Positive psychology

Positive psychology finds contributions from people such as John Carl Flugel, Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, Strümpfer and Gordon Allport (May, 2009). It is viewed as a meta-approach with elements of humanistic-existential psychology, which focusses on meaning and personal experience (Theron, 2009). Accordingly, it also involves gestalt psychology – focussing on the wholeness of experience and the ability of a person to transcend the self. Positive psychology is associated with persons such as Martin Seligman (Held, 2004) and was launched by him in 1999 (Theron, 2009). It is one of three primary directions from which research on well-being may be viewed. The others are salutogenesis (origins of health) by Aaron Antonovsky, and

fortigenesis (origins of strengths) by Strümpfer (May, 2009; Strümpfer, 2006).

Authenticity may be viewed as a basic strength in people (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The assumptions of positive psychology, as presented by May (2009) and discussed by Strümpfer (2006), postulate that humans are primarily social beings and *eudaimonic happiness* is the energy used to achieve one's optimal potential. Positive psychology assumes a person's morality arises from engagement in moral endeavours that reflect the potential for virtues such as fairness, courage and goodness. Essential to human existence are development and change toward something better, more perfect and more intricate. There is a difference between who a person is and who a person can be, should his or her true nature be realised.

The assumptions of positive psychology apply to personal growth and positive relationships as features of well-being (Ryff & Singer, 2008). The authentic journey entails cultivating such intentions as love, humbleness, clarity and forgiveness (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Fry, 2003), with healthy perspectives of challenges and negative feelings (Bauer, McAdams & Pals, 2006; Zukav, 2001). As alluded to, essential to positive psychology are positive emotions and being capable of experiencing these might be a crucial human strength (Fredrickson, 2001). This view does not mean that positive psychology ignores the negative within, as argued in some studies (cf. Cilliers & May, 2010; Held, 2004). Keeping in mind why it was created in the first place, I opine that criticism against positive psychology may be a result of it being misunderstood. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) describe the intention as a deviation from models focusing exclusively on pathology, toward understanding and developing factors allowing people and society to flourish, find meaning and fulfil their potential. According to them this view does not mean forgetting the usefulness of negative emotions, but that individuals can be blinded by the survival (or adaptive) function of positive emotions – given that these are often taken for granted. This notion is understandable when I consider how easy it is to hold on to, or recall, negative emotions; while, on the other hand, it could take much more effort to recall a positive emotion when required. Positive emotions activate a broader range of thought-action selections and have adaptive advantages, creating lasting personal resources (Fredrickson, 2001).

Positive emotions relate to optimal well-being (Fredrickson, 2001; Rothmann, 2013) and the subjective level of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As an approach to studying well-being the assumptions of positive psychology (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016; May, 2009; Strümpfer, 2006) allow considering how authenticity is influenced by human strengths and social roles (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The underlying theme of positive personality includes perspectives of people as adaptive beings (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Furthermore, positive psychology contributed to this study regarding the exploration of meaning, the totality of human experience and transcending the self (Theron, 2009). Human strengths, which Seligman terms "seeing into the soul", are expanded and nurtured to act as buffers against a person's weaknesses and challenges (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6). Aspects of positive psychology may therefore enhance our understanding of developing authenticity (Baron & Parent, 2015), as a resource of personality and of coping within the context of well-being.

2.2.4 Personality psychology

Personality psychology studies factors that affect motivation and the development of personality, personality structure, personality adjustment as well as assessment (Bergh, 2009b). It concerns relatively consistent unique psychological individual attributes (Brown, 2015) that differentiate one person from another (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). Personality may be described as the fairly stable manner preferred by people through which to manage information and interrelate with their environment (Moerdyk, 2009). Demanding situations may amplify habitual emotions, reactions and behaviour, but one must be willing to try new behaviour to develop authenticity (Baron & Parent, 2015). Since a person's personality develops throughout his or her life (Donnellan & Robins, 2009), it complements the process nature of developing authenticity. Its subsystem comprises emotion, so that personality psychology includes individual differences relating to emotion (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). Personality psychology sheds light on individuals' reactions and interactions (Moerdyk, 2009). When we cope, we respond by means of personality aspects (Kernis, 2003) during which emotions affect thoughts and behaviours (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). Personality on its part influences

subjective well-being, according to Diener et al. (1999).

Personality psychology has been influenced by several contributors with different perspectives, as described by Cloninger (2009). For example, trait perspectives are contributed to by Allport, Cattell, McCrae and Costa, with major concepts including factors, extraversion, and neuroticism/emotional stability, trait and type. Type theories saw advances by Carl Jung, as well as Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, highlighting preference styles of different personality types. Within the trait perspective, one may define a trait as a habitual way of adjusting that directs the particular response (Allport, 1927). However, Allport acknowledged that traits are but units of personality and stated that personality or character must also be understood as a whole. Personality theories may concentrate on the connection between thoughts, emotions and/or behaviours (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009), converging to create energetic expressions of an individual's personality across different situations. Hence, regardless of how constant individual traits may be, rapid environmental changes pose the need for theoretical models that focus on human adaptability and continuous learning (Savickas et al., 2009).

Situations that challenge our ability to adapt, are presented each day at work, so that I regard work personality as particularly important. Neff (1977) stated that work personality includes specific interconnected coping styles, motives, defence mechanisms and tactics that people employ to deal with demands in the workplace. Accordingly, individuals may not be able to adapt well to work, but may perform well in other interpersonal contexts such as friendship or marriage. Women may typically have more than one life role while being involved in their careers (Franks et al., 2006; Mayer et al., 2018). The notion is that the situation people find themselves in, plays a significant role in what they do or how they behave (Wagerman & Funder, 2009). Hence, contextual aspects to personality functioning are valuable when seeking to understand women's authenticity and well-being within their male-dominated work environment, particularly in the law enforcement context.

Overall, I had to consider all of the following aspects in attempting to define individuals' personality in relation to all of its dimensions (Bergh, 2009e): visible

physical experiences, traits and behaviours; invisible or unconscious thoughts, feelings, emotions, behaviours, values and attitudes; consistent patterns of characteristics in a number of situations; dynamic aspects of behaviour reflecting change and motivation; individuals' uniqueness; people's ability to adapt and their wholeness in having a body and a mind. In relation to this study's transpersonal orientation, another important dimension resides in the personality's connection to the authentic self (Wood et al., 2008; Zukav, 2001). Consequently, personality psychology is also applicable given the need to understand authentic personality (Wood et al., 2008). Furthermore, authenticity is associated with spirituality (Vaughan, 2002), which involves individuals' higher dimensions (Spaeth, 2010). Ya Azibo (1991) attended to these higher facets of beings by presenting the idea of a metatheory of personality, particularly African personality. Considering metatheory as a means of understanding personality was also entertained by Buss (2009). Ya Azibo (1991) stated that such a metatheory must attempt to explain how an individual's spiritual nature influences their psychological functioning, as well as the interaction between mental, spiritual and physical components of human being.

Having gained insight into the research topic in relation to all the significant and overarching metatheory, I now need to broaden my understanding of the relevant theoretical constructs.

2.3 PRIMARY CONSTRUCTS: WELL-BEING, COPING AND AUTHENTICITY

I used literature to conceptualise the primary constructs applicable to this study, namely well-being, coping and authenticity. Related constructs were also conceptualised such as emotion, stress, emotional intelligence, mind, mindfulness and personality. These are incorporated where applicable, given their interconnectedness with each other and with the primary constructs. The theoretical background informed the framework developed in this study, for the purpose of determining how women develop authenticity. Chapter One contained a discussion on the growing number of women in occupations that are male-dominated – specifically law enforcement – and the challenges posed to their well-being in these fields. Here, I conceptualise well-being in the context of its significance in the

workplace. I also examine coping and adjustment as central processes underlying well-being, authenticity as central to coping and well-being, as well as the "authenticity-coping link" as a valuable approach to studying well-being.

2.4 WELL-BEING AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The World Health Organisation (WHO) explains that health involves a state of total mental, physical and social well-being, not just sickness or disease being absent (WHO, 2006). Well-being in employees and organisations ought to be paramount, as it brings about optimal performance and organisational outcomes (May, 2009; Nzonzo; 2017). Accordingly, it is important that well-being approaches should include dealing with problems in workers and the workplace, as well as developing positive resources in both. To explain well-being and its significance in the workplace, I discuss approaches to well-being and then define it for application in this research. Integrated in these approaches, I continuously make mention of well-being outcomes in the workplace. Well-being is then considered in relation to emotions and thoughts, because the significance of these became apparent in relation to developing authenticity as well.

2.4.1 Approaches to well-being

Keyes (2005) constructed a complete state model of health comprising mental health – social, psychological and emotional well-being – as well as mental illness. He identified well-being and ill-being not as opposites on one continuum, but as two definite yet connected axes. Accordingly, well-being's axis moves from flourishing to languishing where mental health is present and absent respectively, so that total mental health is represented by flourishing being present and languishing being absent. This description corresponds with the WHO definition of well-being. Research on well-being may reflect two general traditions (Ryff, 2017). Hedonic well-being emphasises life satisfaction or happiness plus positive and negative affect, while eudaimonic well-being concerns self-realisation and optimal functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman 1993). Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) explained how these differences may be extended into overarching research traditions on well-being, namely subjective well-being (SWB) and psychological well-being (PWB).

2.4.1.1 Subjective well-being

SWB is built on the premise that individuals react differently to similar situations and assess circumstances according to their unique values, prior experiences and expectations (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Diener et al. (1999) described how individual differences such as personality influences SWB and that personality is a very strong and reliable predictor of SWB. Personality denotes one's habitual manner of responding – the unique emotional and behavioural qualities of a person, usually constant across time and in different situations (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). The SWB perspective frequently emphasises hedonic views on well-being (Disabato, Goodman, Kashdan, Short & Jarden, 2015), meaning emotional well-being (Diener, 1984; Janse van Rensburg, Rothmann & Diedericks, 2017) or the quest for happiness (Chen, Jing, Hayes & Lee, 2013). This perspective may be understood by components of moods and emotions – positive and negative affect – as well as factors of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999; Diener et al., 2008). Layous, Nelson and Lyubomirsky (2012) found favourable associations between well-being, envisioning one's best possible self and positive affect. SWB brings about specific well-being related outcomes for the individual and society, including happiness, feeling good, better health and relationships (Diener et al., 2008). SWB may also be described through *flourishing* (Rothmann, 2013), emphasising how people evaluate life experiences within various contexts (Janse van Rensburg et al., 2017).

2.4.1.2 Psychological well-being

Where SWB targets specific outcomes, PWB targets life content and processes that enable one to live well (Diener et al., 2008; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). PWB comprises cognitive, physical, affective, spiritual, self and social processes (Roothman et al., 2003). It is associated with authentic experiences, optimal functioning (Zhang et al., 2018) and contributes toward experiences that are enjoyable, productive and meaningful (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016). PWB may be defined through key components of personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, autonomy, self-acceptance and positive relations (Biswas-Diener, 2015; Disabato et al., 2015; Ryff, 2017).

Examining eudaimonia as an approach to PWB (Chen et al., 2013; Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Ryff, 2014) relates eudaimonic well-being (EWB) to PWB, since the theoretical foundations of PWB components derive from Aristotle's notion of eudaimonia (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, 2017). Therefore, Ryff and Singer (2008) emphasised that assessing PWB in terms of feeling good, content or satisfied is problematic, since such a formulation of PWB suggests that hedonia and eudaimonia are equivalent. Accordingly, such equivalence is in sharp contradiction to how Aristotle – in relation to eudaimonia – distinguished between satisfaction related to right and wrong desires. Norton (1976) opined that translating *eudaimonia* as *happiness* is a mistranslation and distorts the original meaning. He explained that, where happiness is deemed the ultimate aim of living, eudaimonia is present at each developmental stage signifying that one's actions are aligned with true self. Feelings of individual expressiveness are considered by-products that indicate when potentials are being pursued, but are not sought after as goals per se (Waterman et al., 2010). Bauer et al. (2008) also suggest that well-being from a eudaimonic perspective should go beyond feeling good about oneself. Accordingly, people's journey from distress to an enhanced way of being is often associated with atonement, recovery, increased social progress and personal growth. Personal growth is an aspect of well-being that most closely reflects Aristotle's description of eudaimonia, because it explicitly involves self-realisation – the continuous process of developing one's potential (Ryff & Singer, 2008). As such, in this study PWB is used interchangeably with EWB, yet preference is given to the latter wording in respect of its more explicit conceptualisation of well-being as a phenomenon with deep transformation potential.

EWB involves making a choice to employ one's special potential to strive for excellence (Ryff & Singer, 2008; Waterman et al., 2010). *Eudaimonia* contains the word *daimon* that Carl Jung used to refer to his *inner voice* – that system of thoughts that gives life direction and constructive determination (Norton, 1976). To Norton (1976) *inner voice* denotes that voice inside a person, but as part of an external authority. This notion of being connected to an external authority reminds one of Costello (2015) who relates eudaimonia to spiritual *joy.* Costello (2015) states that only Divine Good can satisfy the psyche's demand for what Frankl terms *ultimate*

meaning. Bauer et al. (2008) presented a perspective of EWB that includes psycho-social integration in such meaning, where deeper self-understanding occurs, and of self in relation to others. They submitted that individuals with enhanced EWB are likely to perceive challenging events in a transformative way, acquiring new insight of themselves from intense pain suffered. EWB includes objective elements of self-actualisation to derive meaningful lives (Waterman, Schwartz & Conti, 2008) and subjective components such as feelings associated with personal expressiveness (Waterman, 1993). The difference between the frameworks of SWB and EWB is in the value attached to subjective experiences (Waterman et al., 2008). In SWB, happiness (hedonia) is the ultimate outcome sought, while eudaimonic activity is motivated by the value associated with it and not the accompanying subjective experience (Waterman et al., 2010). EWB's relation to authenticity is evident, especially in its reflecting the person's best potential and therefore the ability to be his or her best-self. EWB's dimension of purpose in life is, according to Satre, essential for living authentically (Ryff & Singer, 2008; Waterman et al., 2010).

2.4.2 Well-being defined in this study

Concepts of hedonia and eudaimonia have been found to be related (Keyes et al., 2002), while Biswas-Diener (2015) noted that Diener's notion of SWB does not have emotions as its exclusive focus. Waterman et al. (2010) describe that both SWB and PWB include purpose in life, self-discovery, deep involvement in pursuits and enjoying life. Chen et al. (2013) state that both contribute explanatory value toward understanding how well-being relates to well-being measures, goals, social relations, locus of control, personality and spirituality. It is more useful to consider hedonia and eudaimonia together and as components of the same system (Biswas-Diener, 2015). Disabato et al. (2015) also propose that the two (hedonia and eudaimonia) be conceptualised as an all-encompassing well-being construct with various lower order variables such as meaning in life, character strengths and authenticity. As described, Keyes' (2005) complete state model of health includes the different dimensions of well-being and encapsulates all the different approaches to well-being discussed up to now. Keyes' perspective is multidimensional, incorporating both feeling well and functioning well (Janse van Rensburg et al.,

2017). Hence, all the perspectives on well-being discussed, inevitably have a role to play in how women develop authenticity. In this study, I regard well-being to involve the cognitive, physical, affective, spiritual, self and social processes that enable individuals to live well (Roothman et al., 2003) and to develop their best potential (Waterman et al., 2010).

Ryff's (2017) key well-being constructs mentioned earlier (see section 2.4.1.2) also apply to well-being at work (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Rothmann (2008) focusses on well-being in terms of its work-related constructs, namely occupational stress, job satisfaction, work engagement and burnout, plus the links between these dimensions. Taris & Van den Bosch (2018) also describe links between work engagement, burnout, motivation and well-being. In the workplace, well-being results from interactions between characteristics of individuals, the organisation and the work environment (Biggio & Cortese, 2013). Accordingly, well-being at work may be influenced by individual characteristics that include being positive, communication, values, socio-emotional skills, as well as managing conflicts and challenges. Well-being in careers involves experiences and attitudes that result in careers going well, such as ongoing skills development, career mobility and adjusting well to new roles (Kidd, 2008). These may relate to the career needs of women that reflect their unique concerns across their early, mid and late career stages – being the needs for challenge, balance and authenticity, respectively (Barnard, 2018; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Aspects such as an unchallenging job, lack of developmental opportunities and coping with changes in the organisation, may on the other hand threaten their career well-being (Kidd, 2008).

Regardless of the different perspectives, well-being in general involves the mind, the brain and relationships, which find integration through certain qualities (Siegel, 2012). Accordingly, these include mindful awareness, compassion, kindness, as well as love for the self and others. Thoughts and feelings are elements involved in subjective well-being of people (Diener et al., 2008) and also have significance in their psychological (Roothman et al., 2003) and eudaimonic (Waterman et al., 2010) well-being. As per Seligman in 1998, positive emotions (Huang, 2008) such as happiness are associated with well-being (Koydemir et al., 2018; Strümpfer, 2006).

Temporal thoughts held about experiences may also serve as perspectives on well-being (Durayappah, 2011). It is possible to direct emotions positively by altering feelings pertaining to the past, thoughts toward the future and how one regards current experiences (Seligman, 2004). Having established the importance of emotions and thoughts in well-being, its significance is now considered in adjustment and coping as well. This is done because coping is one of the primary constructs in this study – together with well-being and authenticity – and to establish theoretical links across constructs. The above perspectives toward defining well-being distinguished between its causes and outcomes. The sections to follow give additional attention to behavioural processes underlying well-being, which also feed into well-being as an outcome.

2.5 COPING AND ADJUSTMENT: CENTRAL PROCESSES UNDERLYING WELL-BEING

Lazarus (1993, p. 234) in his seminal work considered coping to be a "key concept for theory and research on adaptation and health". *Apt*, as the root of the word *adaptation*, means being able to learn and understand quickly (Savickas, 1997). Accordingly, adaptation involves becoming more congruent through change and being flexible in responses and interactions with one's environment. Coping becomes necessary when stressors (internal and external) such as conflict, frustration and pressures pose adjustment demands on individuals, who may then reciprocate with physical and/or psychological stress reactions (Bergh, 2009d). Ways of coping may entail accepting one's reality (Barnard, Clur & Joubert, 2016), accepting responsibility (Gough, 2016) and self-control (Lazarus, 1991). It may also include positive reappraisal, distancing, confrontive coping, good problem-solving, obtaining social support and escape-avoidance (Lazarus, 1993). Stress generally results from an imbalance between individual capabilities and environmental demands (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Stress is also the result of differences between perceptions and desires, which influence well-being and coping (Cheng, Mauno & Lee, 2014; Edwards, 1992).

Nonetheless, individuals presented with similar stressors (Chen, 2015) may function optimally, adjust well and maintain a positive attitude, while others struggle to cope (May, 2009). A person with a positive disposition will likely view events in a positive way that in turn affects interactions with the world (Diener et al., 1999). Changing one's perspective enables a person to cope emotionally (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016). Stress and emotion may be regulated by changing the relational meaning associated with an experience, altering stress regardless of unchanged circumstances (Lazarus, 1993). This notion corresponds with transpersonal techniques aimed at changing the relationship with the experience, as opposed to changing the experience itself (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Changing one's orientation to a particular challenging situation results in changes in emotional responses, reflecting the process of transformational coping and adjustment (Barnard et al., 2016). Bad occurrences, for instance, elicit unhappiness, but eventually may lose the power to do so as individuals adapt to circumstances (Diener et al., 1999). In the current study I view coping as comprising ongoing behavioural and cognitive efforts utilised by individuals to deal with particular internal and/or external pressures, which they regard as challenging or exceeding their resources (Lazarus, 1993). Coping involves the emotional processes and human responses employed to deal with stressors as brought on by physical and psychological demands (Ryan et al., 2014; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

Previous writings of Lazarus (as cited in Lazarus, 1993) suggested viewing psychological stress as a subsection of emotion. Accordingly, such stress emotions as guilt, anger, anxiety, envy, shame, jealousy, disgust and sadness stem from conflict. Quigley, Lindquist and Barrett (2014) state that emotion may be described as a mental state that is assigned an everyday name (such as happiness, sadness and so forth), used to communicate or understand an internal state. Emotion is the process that integrates and links the mind's inner and interpersonal worlds (Siegel, 2012). Emotions help us to understand the interactions between people (Copp, 2008) and therefore how we cope with each other. The James-Lange theory of emotion posits that behavioural and bodily responses are events that precede emotion, meaning that emotions do not start by consciously experiencing an affect (Lang, 1994). Accordingly, a primary difference was that James viewed conscious

emotion as passively perceiving physiological change as opposed to initiating action, while Lange did not value conscious experience and viewed emotion *as* its physiology. Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2012) state that emotions are regularly experienced and demonstrated as reactions to happenings or thoughts and are associated with physiological bodily changes. They define emotion as energy in motion, used to express intense feelings about thoughts and often intense enough to disrupt thought processes.

Emotions provide more valuable information on how people perform in situations of adaptation and general life, than when considering stress as a single dimension (Lazarus, 1993). Hence, the exploration of emotions in the workplace has become popular among theorists and researchers. For example, emotional labour studies attend to the stress of coping with emotions, where work roles require of someone to display particular expressions to customers (Grandey, 2000). Such emotional job requirements are typical to most occupations that entail interactions with others (Hülsheger et al., 2010). Individual differences or personality characteristics may be linked to emotional labour (Grandey, 2000). Accordingly, personal characteristics as found in women, or in emotionally expressive people, may influence the intensity of emotional labour enacted. Therefore, it can be argued that women may be more burdened by emotional labour, having to regulate their emotions during challenges in male-dominated environments.

How one manages emotions, directly influences the mind's capacity to adapt to potential stressors (Siegel, 2012). Various ways of managing emotions may be employed in the work context, including adjusting emotions by thinking pleasant thoughts (Grandey, 2000). This ability to direct emotions in a positive manner by altering feelings and thoughts relates to well-being (Seligman, 2004). Since this ability concerns employing the transpersonal potential of the mind to transform one's emotions – through awareness of negative emotions – by cultivating positive ones (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993), it may therefore relate to authenticity as well. In doing so, it can be inferred that one would be in a better position to choose to respond or express oneself from a place of best possible thoughts, feelings and therefore behaviour.

2.6 AUTHENTICITY: A CONCEPT CENTRAL TO COPING AND WELL-BEING

Several studies link authenticity to well-being (cf. Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; Koydemir et al., 2018; Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018). However, literature lacks clear definitions or conceptualisations of authenticity (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004; Knoll et al., 2015; Kreuzbauer & Keller, 2017). Some authors may use *core* self (Kernis, 2003), true self (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018), best-self (Roberts, Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy & Quinn, 2005), whole self (Glavas, 2016) or spiritual self (Kiesling, Sorell, Montgomery & Colwell, 2006) in relation to authenticity. Given the influence of my own experiences and beliefs about developing authenticity, I acknowledge that my first inclination was to use the term *Higher Self* in this regard, for I tend to strongly associate my authenticity with my spiritual self as well. It was evident though that this tendency would increase the possibility of imposing my views on participants of what it means to develop authenticity. I strived to create a framework for developing authenticity that would be of value to individuals with religions different to my own or with no religion at all, and who may not acknowledge spiritual aspects to their being. Furthermore, being aware of my philosophy of science, paradigm perspectives (Chapter Three) and intended contributions (Chapter One), I opted for the use of *best-self* as opposed to *Higher Self* or *true self*. In this section I establish authenticity as a concept central to both coping and well-being by conceptualising authenticity, determining how it relates to thoughts and emotions (as with well-being and coping) and by exploring various views around authenticity.

The development of the word *authentic* can be traced from Greek *authentikos*, meaning *original* that derives from *authentes*, meaning *doer* or *master*. *Authentes* comes from *autos*, meaning *self,* while the root *hentes* means *being* or *doer*. Being authentic therefore denotes something possessing the authority or power of its original creator (http://wordinfo.info/unit/3771/ip:16). Following an integrative analytic approach to the literature I reviewed, I regard authenticity as an individual difference construct (Kernis, 2003; Wood et al., 2008) formed by an ongoing process (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014) of the alignment of thoughts, emotions and behaviour (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Schlegel, Hicks, Arndt & King, 2009) with best-self

(Human, Biesanz, Parisotto & Dunn, 2012; Roberts et al., 2005). Authenticity involves employing mindfulness (Carson & Langer, 2006; Tomlinson, Yousaf, Vittersø & Jones, 2018), responsible choice (Baron & Parent, 2015) and loving intentions (Sisk, 2016; Zukav, 2001) to guide adaptive responses (Bishop et al., 2004; Kernis & Goldman, 2006) and manifest corresponding consequences (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Authenticity relates to being genuine (Enli, 2017). Sheldon, Davidson and Pollard (2004, pp. 249-250) refine it to denote "emotional genuineness and psychological depth". Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) found that individuals' experiences of inauthenticity were associated with negative emotions, which resulted from having to behave or speak contrary to how they felt or thought they should have. Emotions involve complex intrinsic mental processes, as well as discrete feelings (LaMothe, 2010). Hence, being authentic requires emotional intelligence (McGrath, 2013).

The notion of emotional intelligence was popularised by Daniel Goleman, describing it as the skilled correlation between feelings, thoughts and actions that involves consciously controlling and shaping emotional states (McGrath, 2013). Accordingly, it involves manifesting feelings to aid in attaining desired results and entails self-awareness, relationship management, self-management and mindfulness. Emotional intelligence enables one to understand the emotions of another and to see others in more accurate ways (Yadav & Punia, 2016). Correspondingly, Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2012) describe emotional intelligence as the capacity for perceiving, integrating, understanding and reflectively managing emotions of the self and others. Accordingly, it includes the ability to use the energy of our emotions as guiding force of our thoughts and actions and the ability to manage emotions cognitively. Another form of intelligence is that of spiritual intelligence (Arsang-Jang, Khoramirad, Pourmarzi & Raisi, 2017; Kilcup, 2016). It involves an openness to new ways of being, seeing, new experiences and to strive toward authenticity (Sisk, 2016). Spiritual intelligence relates to emotional intelligence (Yadav & Punia, 2016) through increased awareness of thoughts and feelings (Vaughan, 2002). Spirituality may be seen as a form of intelligence, in that one uses spiritual resources in problem-solving and goal attainment (Emmons, 2009). Spirituality relates to

authenticity (Barton, 2009) and to well-being (Giannone & Kaplin, 2017) in helping one to look for joy and love underneath life's turmoil and stress (Vaughan, 2002).

Authenticity may be viewed as the unhindered operation of the *core* self (Kernis, 2003). It involves acting in line with the true self: honest, sincere (Kernis & Goldman, 2006) and according to one's personal experiences and beliefs (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017). Authenticity is considered a basic human strength, requiring an understanding of social roles (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). It entails being unpretentious and expressing your intentions and who you are to others (Barnard et al., 2008). Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) define authenticity as an affective state, stemming from an ongoing self-appraisal of the degree to which self-expression corresponds with one's subjective, socially formed expectation of the self, relative to others. Cranton and Carusetta (2004) stated that authenticity is about knowing who you are within the context of your social world, how you are influenced by this context and what your place is in the world.

Sheehy's writings (as cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011) also relate authenticity to self and society, explaining how the crucial quest for authenticity in mid-life is a spiritual one. Accordingly, the self is part of one's identity as depended on before mid-life and was constructed along the expectations of society or others. This externally inspired identity becomes a stabilising force, before the individual acquires the personal resources to be steered by an internal guidance system. This view reminds one of Poll and Smith's (2003) work on spiritual identity, which develops given the individuals' belief that they have a spiritual nature. Authenticity requires one to take apart the self to reconstruct it (Sheehy as cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Our beliefs about who we are and what we think we are, are significant in our spiritual quests, and any self-concept (defined below) may be deconstructed according to Buddhist traditions (Vaughan, 2002). Still, major theories concerning identity development have disregarded the importance of spirituality in the formation of identity and its ability to bring about resiliency and change similar to strong personal identity (Poll & Smith, 2003). Spiritual identity involves the self's continuous quest to understand the nature, meaning and purpose

of life, which leads to conduct that is aligned with one's central values (Kiesling et al., 2006).

Authenticity links to self-values (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), to one's identity (Erickson, 1995) and involves being unique (Dewar, 2016; Koydemir et al., 2018; Moulard, Raggio & Folse, 2016). It stems from an ongoing process of adaptation that results in the development of a distinct, yet integrated self-identity (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014). Accordingly, feelings of authenticity and self-confidence interact, suggesting the possible significance of authenticity aspects in identity work. Brown (2015) does link identity work to authenticity, among other things. Accordingly, the notion of identity work is significant in debates about the way in which identities ought to be researched and theorised. Disputes about approaches are based on the degree to which identities are: ascribed to or chosen by persons; fluid or adaptive as opposed to generally stable; fragmented or unified; inspired or not inspired by the desire for positive meaning; and shaped or not shaped by the need for authenticity (Brown, 2015). However, Brown (2015) opines it is important to consider these sets of aspects collectively when attempting to understand identities in organisations, so as to appreciate the subtle differences of the various interweaved approaches to identity.

"Identity work" involves the strategies or process of regulating and modifying identity, while "work identity" denotes "identity at work" or who one is within the work context (Adams & Crafford, 2012, p. 1). "Identity work at work" denotes the process of pursuing continuous balance between personal identity and demands posed by the work context (Adams & Crafford, 2012, p. 2). The significance of authenticity aspects in work identity therefore seems probable (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014), also given that Super described career as an expression of self-concept (Savickas et al., 2009). Self-concept relates to aspects of self (Ryan, LaGuadia & Rawsthorne, 2005) that are valued by the individual (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018). It implies one's personal view of your characteristics, continually adjusts across life-span through interactions with one's surroundings and allows one to joyfully express distinctive qualities (Amundson et al., 2009; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Positive self-concept intends self-esteem, an important component of emotionally intelligent conduct (Coetzee &

Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Authenticity, positive self-esteem, good decision-making styles and negative links with worry are associated with successful functioning and well-being (Waterman et al., 2010). Individuals who live authentically are more likely to experience SWB at work (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017).

Carson and Langer (2006) describe authentic living to entail acting according to one's own feelings as opposed to the perceived expectations of others. Furthermore, it involves complete engagement with the environment and not being concerned with seeking other's approval or boosting poor self-esteem. Barnard and Simbhoo's (2014) study of senior managers within the public service revealed that authenticity is experienced when individuals are allowed to behave in line with their personal values and favoured personality styles. Wood et al. (2008, p. 395) stated authentic personality suggests that persons who are more authentic are also "more extraverted, agreeable, conscientious, open and less neurotic". Notwithstanding consistency in individual traits, swift changes in the environment call for theoretical models emphasising adaptability and constant learning in humans (Savickas et al., 2009). Along this thinking, Fleeson and Wilt (2010) found that individuals often vary behaviour, acting contradictory to traits or character. Their study did not support trait-consistent theory and found instead that deviating from traits do not reduce levels of authenticity. Accordingly, flexible behaviour may at times reflect enhanced authenticity and appears to be characteristically genuine. Authenticity for Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) entailed aligning behaviour with favoured personality styles. Zukav (2001) takes his definition beyond self – viewing authenticity as the process of aligning personality with one's soul. The terms soul and psyche are viewed by many modern depth psychologists as more or less synonymous (Corbett, 2010). Zukav's definition reminds of Jung's notion of self. Jung compares self to a river that flows toward its source (Madden, 2010).

2.7 THE "AUTHENTICITY-COPING LINK" AS VALUABLE APPROACH TO WELL-BEING

Plato took the lead in basing mental health on the congruence between different parts of the personality, recognising human's spiritual dimensions and oneness

(Costello, 2015). In regard to understanding and enhancing well-being, Siegel (2012) as well as Sisk (2016) point to the inter-connectedness between all things – internal and external. Personality aspects have been linked to authenticity by Ryan et al. (2005) and throughout this study. Personality is usually stable across various situations and entails how people respond out of habit by means of emotions and behaviour (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Coping in itself may be conceptualised as a personality trait (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980), but then a person is viewed as traits and not as a whole living being (Lazarus, 1993). A trait is not a defensive response in itself, but a dispositional attribute that may result in a response (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Ariza-Montes et al. (2017) state that authenticity, and therefore SWB, may be influenced negatively when individuals adapt responses or behaviour according to others' expectations. Accordingly, such a way of coping and its effect on authenticity and SWB will differ from person to person. The coping process approach emphasises the influences of contextual and temporal aspects on coping, and is therefore more successful in incorporating particular coping actions and thoughts in different stress contexts that demand coping (Lazarus, 1993). Viewing coping as a process complements the process nature of developing authenticity as well. In addition, a constantly changing environment requires theoretical models that target adaptability and ongoing learning in humans (Savickas et al., 2009). To this end, authenticity may be central in understanding the adaptive characteristics of optimal self-esteem – part of a broader psychological system involving affective dispositions, personality, motivational orientations and modes of cognitive processing (Kernis, 2003).

An authentic person employs mindfulness – a cognitive ability that enhances adaptability (Carson & Langer, 2006). It is necessary to first clarify what exactly *mind* entails. Siegel (2012) states that the mind denotes a process that is embodied and also relational, through which the movement of energy and information is regulated. He describes how the mind emerges from both the regulatory roles occurring in the entire nervous system, as well as our relationships with others and creation, when we share energy and information (or communicate). Self-regulation is therefore significant in developing authenticity (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017). Enhanced authentic self-awareness, self-regulation (Knoll et al., 2015) and positive modelling

also contribute to developing authenticity and enhanced well-being, in those with whom we interact (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). In our interactions, well-being is controlled by learned emotional responses to the self, to people and to things (Carson & Langer, 2006) and is influenced positively by mindfulness (Baer et al., 2008). The ability to handle emotions affects the mind's ability to adapt to potential stressors (Siegel, 2012). Emotional regulation processes may facilitate adaptive coping or maladaptive coping (Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema & Schweizer, 2010), with mindfulness enabling the former strategy of emotional regulation (Bishop et al., 2004; Pidgeon, Lacota & Champion, 2012).

Mindfulness involves "non-reactivity to inner experience", which means being able to allow thoughts and feelings to ebb and flow, yet not being dictated by such emotional fluctuation (Baer et al., 2008, p. 330). The practice of mindfulness also resides in qualities such as gratitude, forgiveness and compassion that can be cultivated through development of seven significant attitudes: trust, beginner's mind, patience, non-judging, letting go, acceptance and non-striving (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). Particularly, the beginner's mind is an attitude that allows one to be open to learn about various possibilities (Suzuki, 2010a), by viewing each moment as interesting and fresh (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). Other key mindfulness skills are the following: observing or paying attention to stimuli (cognitions, bodily sensations, emotions, physical sensory information); being able to put stimuli, perceptions, thoughts or experiences into words (describing); acting with awareness in the present moment; and "accepting without judgement" (Baer, Smith & Allen, 2004, p. 194). The ability to put such things as perception into words is important in mindfulness (Baer et al., 2004). However, being mindful is also associated with increased objectivity because such individuals are open to others' opinions and listen before they speak (Bonthuys, Botha & Stols, 2017). Mindfulness skills relate to authenticity through being able to notice novel things in the environment, to be accepting of experiences and to perceive things mindfully from a positive perspective (Carson & Langer, 2006). Therefore, more consideration is given to the perception aspect of personality and its influence on behaviour.

As authentic functioning increases, one becomes aware that aspects of self are

multifaceted and that personality dualities exist in the self (Kernis, 2003). Developing authenticity therefore entails becoming aware of inner dualities and accepting these. Awareness is a component of authenticity and vital for well-being, as it facilitates a conscious understanding of truth in relation to the self (Zukav, 2001). Consciousness and understanding are higher order cognitive functions (Perlovsky, 2006). However, consciousness or present awareness (Nevid, Rathus & Greene, 2011) on its own does not guarantee intrinsic power or authentic empowerment (Suzuki, 2010b). Authenticity also requires intention and choice to manifest authenticity-related behaviour or consequences (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Zukav, 2001). Hence, I further posit that apart from awareness, a conscious choice must be made to develop both aspects of a given personality duality into the best it can be and as may be required by a particular situation. Carson and Langer (2006) suggest attaining authenticity by employing mindfulness, which entails focussing on accepting and exploring one's current experience as opposed to evaluating or criticising the self. They state that self-acceptance removes the need to make up for perceived individual shortfalls, facilitating the revelation of true self to others.

Authenticity requires a multisensory perception (Zukav, 2000), which transcends awareness obtained through just the five senses (Valverde, 2016). The information we take in, through our perceptions, may also occur by means of intuition (Sharf, 2010) and not just through the physical senses. When the personality becomes multisensory, it learns to recognise its soul, to use awareness and intuition in growing personality toward the soul and to explore differences between intentions of the personality and the soul (Zukav, 2001). Intentions are important in moving toward authenticity (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Knoll et al., 2015; Lyubovnikova et al., 2017), which is associated with accepting the self (Koydemir et al., 2018). Key to self-acceptance, is accepting real or perceived past mistakes and employing mindfulness to extract valuable lessons and developmental opportunities (Carson & Langer, 2006). It has been determined that coping involves the ongoing cognitive efforts (Lazarus, 1993), emotional processes and human responses employed to deal with stressors or demands of the world (Ryan et al., 2014). A mindfulness perspective improves cognitive flexibility and as a result, enhances behavioural flexibility and adapting to one's environment in ways that are meaningful. In this

manner authenticity can facilitate behavioural adaptability (Carson & Langer, 2006).

Authenticity is a mechanism that gives meaning to life, when there is alignment between the perceived true self and behaviour (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Meaning making of phenomena may be derived by finding what can be learned from experiences or consequences (Carson & Langer, 2006; Cooper, Scandura & Schriesheim, 2005), looking for positive meaning in events and searching for the greater good (De Crom & Rothmann, 2018). Park (2013) presents a meaning making model along global and situational levels. Accordingly, distress results from perceptions people hold of discrepancies between meanings they attach to specific situations (situational meaning) and what they desire or believe (global meaning). Distress leads to efforts employed to diminish perceived discrepancies and subsequent anguish. Furthermore, global meaning has spirituality as a common influence or source and affects adjustment and well-being. This view reflects how spiritual matters will ultimately arise when exploring the meaning of being human, which may help understand experiences, behaviour and development (Hiles, 2002).

Metz (2010) proposed that notable meaning can be obtained by transcending the self in what is good, true and beautiful. However, this conception is based on a notion of self-transcendence where such meaning entails physical properties, while things "are good in themselves, apart from any relationship to God or the long-term future" (Metz, 2010, p. 391). In Chapter One it was established that authenticity is related to well-being through key intrapersonal processes such as meaning making, while some studies equate authenticity with true self (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018). With truth being a source of meaning (Metz, 2010), I opted to explore authenticity (as a *source* of meaning) in relation to a core self, as opposed to exploring *merely* meaning. In the process I could utilise such meaning making models as proposed by Park (2013), to help me understand authenticity within the contexts of coping and well-being of women in a male-dominated work environment. More recently, Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2017) explored how traffic officers in South Africa utilise spirituality as a way of coping. With authenticity linked to spirituality, authenticity may therefore also be linked to coping mechanisms or strategies aimed at meaning making.

The adaptive component is rooted in the fact that one can intentionally integrate and direct mind, mechanisms and relationships toward health (Siegel, 2012). Aspects of self and of the mind have been explored thoroughly in this chapter and were found to interweave through the primary constructs presented. For example, Barnard & Simbhoo (2014) hypothesised a relationship between authenticity, the ability to cope and resultant well-being, while Layous et al. (2012) found associations between one's best possible self and well-being as well. Along such thinking, I summarise theoretical links established between the key constructs. To do this, I found it useful to consider the primary constructs by *thinking* in a direction opposite to how they have been presented thus far – hence, using *authenticity* as point of departure.

2.8 REFLECTION: THEORETICAL LINKS BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS OF AUTHENTICITY, COPING AND WELL-BEING

In qualitative research, data analysis begins the moment that researchers acquire knowledge that influences the way they interpret data (Morgan, 2008). Reflection on relevant metatheories and constructs in this chapter, has thus far helped me to produce preliminary conceptual frameworks that anchor the research theoretically, informing all aspects in the research process (Trafford & Leshem, 2008). I considered the elements in the definition I adopted for authenticity previously in this chapter, and recognised in it the emotional and behavioural characteristics contained in the construct of personality. Personality aspects such as emotions, thoughts and behaviour also play a role in both the constructs of coping (Ryan et al., 2014) and well-being (Diener et al., 2008; Roothman et al., 2003).

Other relevant metatheoretical constructs include personality, stress and emotions, emotional intelligence and mindfulness. By breaking down the construct definitions into constituent words and/or terms, the corresponding aspects between these were revealed. I then linked similar elements across definitions and particularly considered how all these elements in the various definitions relate to those in the definition adopted for authenticity. Revisiting and reflecting on literature and theory constitute interpretation (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004; Morgan, 2008). I seek to understand and advance the whole, by deriving and considering its constituent

components – moving to and fro between the whole phenomenon and its parts (Kelly, 2006c; Knoll et al., 2015). I explain what I deem the *whole* and the *parts* of developing authenticity in Chapter Four. I used the same circular movement as was used in interpreting interview texts, to make sense of constructs through texts produced in the literature review. This technique illustrates being increasingly open to new information (Bonthuys et al., 2017) and the development the researcher's preunderstandings as described by Heidegger (DuBose, 2010a). My trail of thought, regarding the corresponding aspects across theoretical attributes and definitions, is illustrated in figure 2.2.

In explaining my way of thinking I give examples, following the top cloud callouts from left to right and then the bottom ones from left to right in figure 2.2, all in relation to the definition of authenticity. This figure depicts that authenticity is a process, but so is well-being and coping. Authenticity is viewed as an individual difference construct and involves thoughts, emotions and behaviour. These elements point to personality, but also came up in literature on perception, well-being, emotional intelligence, mind, stress and coping. Emotions are involved throughout, so that it is important that I understand exactly what these entail. During my exploration of the mindfulness component of authenticity, I had to first find a definition of mind that made sense to me in relation to developing authenticity (bottom cloud callouts). I noticed that authenticity involves responses (regulated by mind), while they are also involved in coping, stress reactions, personality and well-being. The "best-self" concept I elected to use in my definition of authenticity was also the focus of some studies related to well-being and personality. Authenticity is associated with certain consequences in much the same way as well-being leads to various outcomes.

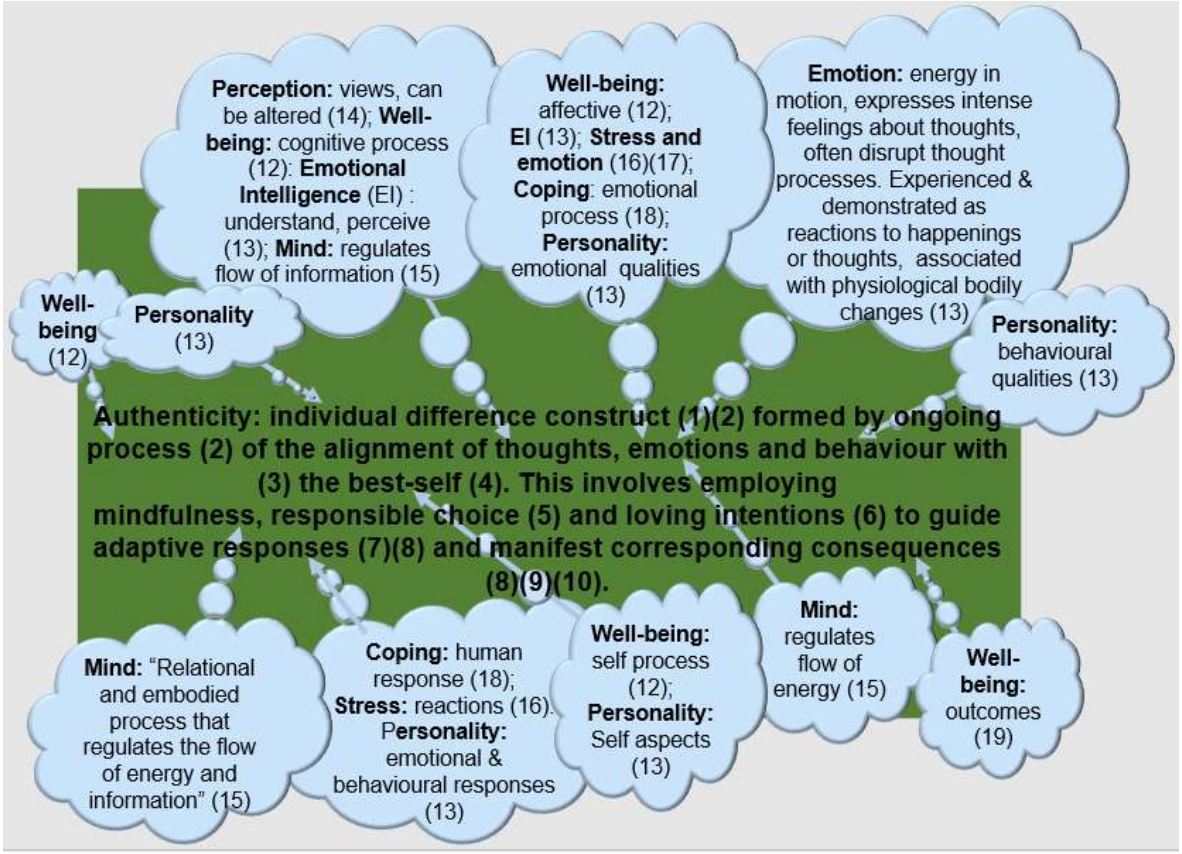


Figure 2.2: Corresponding aspects across theoretical attributes and definitions.

Related authors from whose work theoretical constructions were derived (in figure 2.2) are:

(1) Kernis, 2003; (2) Wood et al., 2008; (3) Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; (4) Kernis & Goldman, 2006; (5) Human et al., 2012; (6) Carson & Langer, 2006; (7) Ariza-Montes et al., 2017; (8) Baron & Parent, 2015; (9) Sisk, 2016; (10) Zukav, 2001; (11) Bishop et al., 2004; (12) Roothman et al., 2003; (13) Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012; (14) Husserl, 1936/1970; (15) Siegel, 2012; (16) Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; (17) Lazarus (as cited in Lazarus, 1993); (18) Ryan et al., 2014; (19) Diener et al., 2008.

An illustration is also provided of the theoretical relationships (examples) between the primary constructs (figure 2.3). The arrows show how I linked aspects of authenticity, coping and well-being. Sometimes literature enabled me to make direct associations, while other times (e.g., between authenticity and coping) I had to establish links via related constructs (such as mindfulness). The bold arrows especially include examples of more direct theoretical links established on the level of the primary constructs. These helped me to describe the research findings, to

integrate literature into the discussion of findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) and to bring theoretical findings together (Trafford & Leshem, 2008).

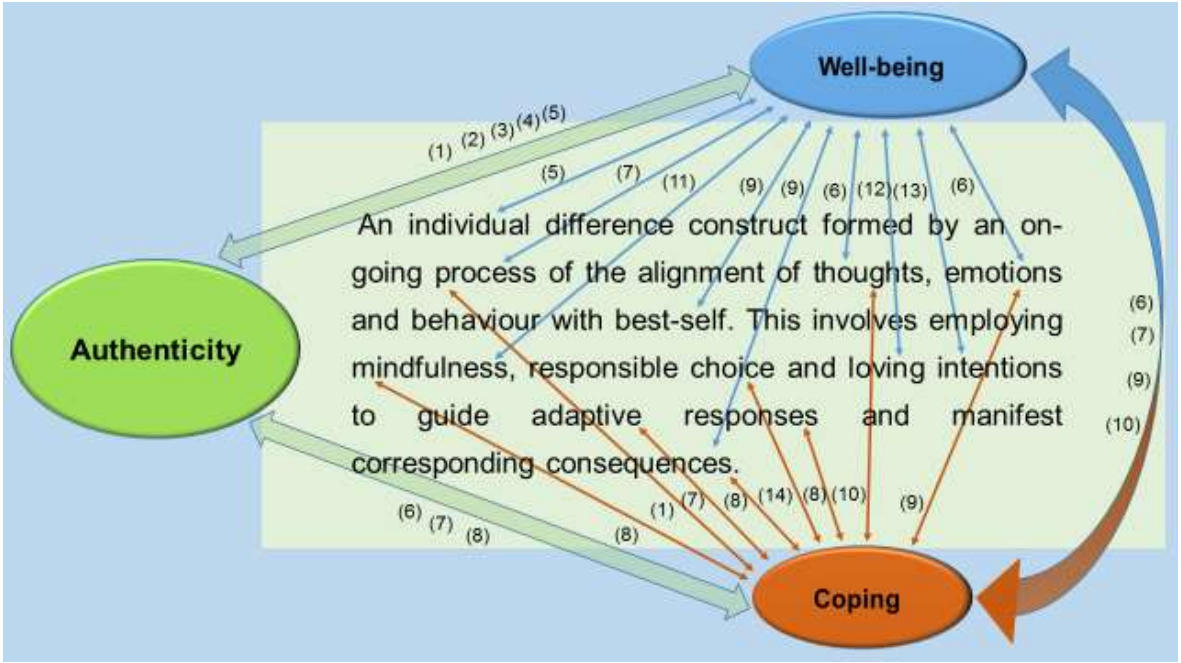


Figure 2.3: Theoretical relationships between authenticity, coping and well-being.

The references are indicated as numbers to the left of the arrow to which they apply. The corresponding authors (in figure 2.3) are as follows:

(1) Ariza-Montes et al., 2017; (2) Ménard & Brunet, 2011; (3) Waterman et al., 2010; (4) Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018; (5) Wood et al., 2008; (6) Kernis & Goldman, 2006; (7) Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; (8) Carson & Langer, 2006; (9) Roberts et al., 2005; (10) Grandey, 2000; (11) Baer et al., 2008; (12) Zukav, 2001; (13) Sisk, 2016; (14) Baron & Parent, 2015.

2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter comprised the literature review that I presented by discussing the theoretical perspectives within which the present study is grounded. The literature was dealt with in such a way so as to show the alignment of theoretical constructs with the aim(s) of the literature review. I commenced with the overall perspectives I chose to help me understand the behaviour of women in the study, in relation to developing authenticity. These were humanistic-existential psychology,

transpersonal psychology, positive psychology and personality psychology. Each of these offered valuable contributions that I could apply toward making meaning of the phenomenon. For example, I used Heidegger's ontological question of "What is human being?" as a framework within which to think about Hiles' (2002) proposed five interdependent humanistic-existential questions. According to Heidegger, *being* is broadly authentic or inauthentic. This perspective enabled me to then view Hiles' questions around being human slightly differently. Hence, I could now pay attention to what makes a human being authentic – even what makes my subjective lived experiences, potential, growth and connections authentic? Conversely, what makes all of these aspects inauthentic? By integrating the rest of my metatheoretical lenses, I then see that authentic being involves a transpersonal journey during which transformation takes place of personality. This journey is an ongoing process, during which the person intentionally develops characteristics that will allow the self to become its best.

I conceptualised authenticity, coping and well-being and derived their definitions for application in this study. The theoretical links were established and these are primarily reflected by the fact that personality responses such as thoughts, emotions and behaviour play an important role in all three constructs. They form the primary constructs in this study, and the literature review strengthens the notion that authenticity may serve as a novel coping mechanism through which women's well-being may be enhanced. The theoretical links between the three primary constructs are also reflected by the interaction of various related constructs with them and with each other. To establish these theoretical links, I discussed well-being and its importance in the workplace and explained coping and adjustment as central processes underlying well-being. Links also became apparent by considering authenticity as a concept central to coping and acquiring well-being. Finally, the "authenticity-coping link" was presented as valuable study approach to well-being. Chapter Three follows and presents the methodological framework.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the methodological framework applied in the study. The primary objective of this research was to create a framework for developing authenticity, by exploring women's experiences of authenticity and how these relate to their well-being. The research question that made it possible to attain the study's objectives, was "How do women in a traditionally male-dominated work context such as law-enforcement, develop authenticity in maintaining their well-being?" The methodology involves the general research approaches adopted to conduct the research and dictates the strategies chosen (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006), so as to meet the research objective(s).

The methodological framework is primarily informed by the paradigmatic assumptions underlying a researcher's scientific orientation. As such this chapter commences with a discussion of my paradigmatic assumptions as it pertains to metaphysics and how these are applied in the methodological orientation of this study. Following the paradigmatic assumptions, the hermeneutic phenomenological (Benner, 2008) and transpersonal (Anderson, 2015) approaches are discussed as they were both utilised to best answer the research question posed in this study. In this chapter it should become clear why I integrated these two approaches as guiding the methodological framework. Their selection and application also align with the secondary objectives described in Chapter One, pertaining to making a methodological contribution by applying approaches in an integrative way.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

My assumptions in this study are reflected by the particular paradigms chosen as applicable to the study (Ponterotto, 2005), for the purpose of producing answers to the phenomenon that are meaningful (Iosifides, 2018). These are the paradigms I identify with best in terms of my beliefs about truth and how I elected to access truth and generate scientific knowledge. According to Kafle (2011), the key elements of

paradigms in qualitative research are metaphysics, methodology, quality and ethics. In this section, I focus my discussion on metaphysics because it directs the empirical propositions, or concepts, which both anchor and orient this research and my thinking. The methodology is also addressed in this section, but only in terms of the methodological assumptions underlying the operationalisation of the study. I provide an introduction to the full discussion of the particular methodological approaches in the next sections 3.3 and 3.4. Although ethics is briefly addressed in reviewing my axiology below, quality and ethics have been alluded to in Chapter One and receive critical attention later in Chapter Four.

3.2.1 Metaphysics

Metaphysics comprise ontology, epistemology and axiology (Kafle, 2011). Accordingly, axiology involves ethics, as well as the effects of the researcher's values and views in the generation of knowledge.

3.2.1.1 Ontological stance

Ontology involves what can be known regarding the nature of reality being studied, and several related ontological perspectives have evolved over time (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). For example, realism posits that reality requires proof and is capable of being proven, while idealism posits that *being* and *reality* only exist in consciousness (Heidegger, 1953/1996; Snape & Spencer, 2003). Neither idealism nor realism adequately reflect the ontology as it pertains to a phenomenon such as authenticity (Heidegger, 1953/1996). This is because, in our search to understand what we can know for sure about authentic human existence, we are likely to run into aspects of a spiritual nature (Hiles, 2002). Hence, when we explore the world we need to be open-minded, because reality is deemed far more complex as to be explained by any theory (Grof et al., 2008). Existing theoretical perspectives provide valuable, yet only temporary evaluations and integrations of what can be known at a particular time, so that descriptions provided of such reality are therefore not exhaustive (Grof et al., 2008). I predominantly adhered to an ontology as presented by Martin Heidegger, who shifted the focus of hermeneutics from method to ontology (Kreber et al., 2007; Thrift & Amundson, 2007).

Heidegger's ontology involves the concept of *Da-sein*, pointing to the phenomenological process of "being-in-the-world" (Bailey, 2010, p. 46). It is suitable for contending with the complex nature of reality, while an ontological stance is taken in which *being* and *reality* intertwine in a person's being (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Accordingly, participants' statements are regarded in terms of the possibility that they may be true or false, or at the hand of their ability to help discover or cover up *being*. As being and reality intertwine in a person's being, my research ontology is, on the one hand, rooted in subjective knowledge with multiple realities, while such reality is viewed as an individual construct that depends on different circumstances (Kafle, 2011). However, I also believe in the building of science from different perspectives (or multiple realities), where different perspectives do not constitute an ultimate truth, but parts of a truth or body of knowledge. Iosifides (2018) criticises the traditional opposition of qualitative methods toward the idea of objectivity and its constant equation to positivist conceptualisation. Hence, I value existing theory and metatheoretical perspectives as critical to anyone's understanding of a phenomenon. Alternative ideas of truth and objectivity are proposed in an effort to dismantle the objectivity/subjectivity contradictions in social research (Iosifides, 2018). This view relates to the ontological notion of critical realism (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

Iosifides (2018) provides a valuable discussion of critical realism and its most important assumptions. Accordingly, some mechanisms, processes and social entities occur independently of how they are interpreted and conceptualised. This is because realism allows for ontology to consider reality that exists beyond discursive constructions and interpretations. Critical realism recognises the structure and causal powers in objects – the ability to act in particular ways and to undergo change (Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer, 2002). Thus, we do access processes and phenomena in the social world through our interpretive possibilities, conceptual and theoretical ideas, as well as discursive formations (Iosifides, 2018). However, there are various different approaches and perspectives to realism (Easton, 2010). Some perspectives reflect aspects that belong to the ontology that is social, since language for realists also has referential potential; while being conceptualised as an open system that constantly interacts with its outside world and practice (Iosifides, 2018).

The metatheory of critical realism serves to modify the practices of qualitative research by integrating within qualitative methods the notions of subjectivity, objectivity, self-reflexivity, interpretation and causality (Iosifides, 2018). Critical realism enabled me to explore possible ways of being and to critically view them as authentic or inauthentic, while including the perspectives of participants. However, my ontological understanding extends beyond assumptions associated with critical realism. I discuss critical realism further in section 3.2.1.2 after this, as I must do so in relation to the epistemology while referring back to the ontology. The ontology of critical realism can be described as a transcendental realist one (Easton, 2010) that in itself has various versions, but first and foremost concerns "the being of the objects of science" (Bhaskar, 2009, p. 6). My thoughts go back to my spiritual or *transcendent* experience described in Chapter One. *Transcendent* as opposed to *transcendental*, since Bhaskar (2009) describes transcendental realism to oppose transcendent realism. Accordingly, the latter advances a realm of other-being which is uncognisable and not accessible to us. On the other hand, King & DeCicco (2009, p. 70) describe "transcendental awareness" to involve "transcendent self". Nonetheless, I have seen other people having similar experiences to the one I described, but because I have never been *there* (or did not know *how to get there*), I could not fully perceive it as *real*. Before my encounter I never experienced such a reality for myself – outside, yet from within. Nonetheless, such reality or certainly the possibility of it existed before then, regardless of my knowledge of it.

I describe other assumptions that I adopted about the nature of reality being studied, in relation to how women develop authenticity, by consistently reverting back to Heidegger's ontological views. Women in a male-dominated work environment face unique challenges that require novel ways of coping. It may be difficult for them to express what they think and feel in these environments. These aspects also link to their needs of growth, finding meaning and self-actualisation (Gilot, 2008). Understanding sense of self (or then, authenticity) requires understanding it as a mode of being, or as a phenomenological process (Bailey, 2010). Sense of self is shaped during personality development and is significant, as it influences reactions and ways of coping (Bergh, 2009c). Therefore, I must engage with all aspects of the women's personalities – including perceptions, feelings, thoughts and behaviour –

as a phenomenological process, with which I can also relate. Since we understand others by understanding ourselves (Davidsen, 2013; Dilthey, 1900/1972; Heidegger, 1953/2010), I also need to be aware of these aspects within myself. I believe that as women form their sense of self, they make choices to adopt a mode of being that is authentic or inauthentic. Individuals' growth and adaptation is made possible by developing resources to empower themselves and by employing steps that identify and remove obstacles to their growth, potential and well-being (Hiles, 2002). Hence, I believe that whatever we choose, we are responsible for creating consequences of well-being outcomes or not. The reality individuals experience is therefore the reality that they have created for themselves. Should the reality they create not be in line with their authentic selves, this may be ascribed to having adopted a mode of being that is based primarily on the perceptions or expectations of others (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017; Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018). In the process people explore how they are linked as beings to the rest of human existence (Gilot, 2008). I wanted to find ways of coming to know participants' possible modes of being, while being open to understanding parts of their being that transcend self.

3.2.1.2 Epistemological stance

Epistemology involves the nature of knowledge and the way of knowledge acquisition (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Given the interactional nature involved in developing authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Lyubovnikova et al., 2017), I consider both interpretivism and social constructionism as research orientation. Assumptions adopted from the interpretive epistemological stance relate to the relationship between researcher and participant (Ponterotto, 2005), theories guiding *truth* and the way of knowledge acquisition (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Accordingly, the researcher and participant have an interactive relationship, in which the individual is influenced by the practice of being researched. Therefore, I had to acknowledge the influence of my own assumptions pertaining to how data are collected and analysed. Meaning making occurred through understanding subjective experience and perceptions, because the knowledge involved was subjective (Kafle, 2011). Understanding the phenomenon therefore required an empathic interaction and caring stance on my part (Laverty, 2003), so participants

felt free to reveal their truths. Interpretation was deemed “truth” if it brought about, or aided in, the taking of actions that resulted in desired or envisaged outcomes (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Knowledge regarding participant experiences was acquired primarily by induction, but also through deduction – deriving patterns from observations (former) and by logically reaching propositions theoretically (Snape & Spencer, 2003; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006).

Interpretivism and social constructionism are comparable in that they are interpretive, qualitative and concern meaning. Both have implied ontological connotations. They differ in their ontological assumptions on the nature of reality that we seek to understand and Terre Blanche et al. (2006b) describe these differences. Accordingly, interpretivism focusses on subjective understandings and experiences, while social constructionism aims to explain how these understandings and experiences arise from and influence grander discourses. Interpretivism views individuals as the source of their experiences, thoughts and emotions. Social constructionism views people as if their thoughts, emotions and experiences are produced by meaningful systems that exist not on the individual level, but on a social level. Kelly (2006c) states that both perspectives assume the existence of multiple realities that are socially constructed. Accordingly, interpretation in both entails the researcher’s perspectives and professional judgements, while more attention is afforded to context and values.

In light of the way they are presented by some writers (as above), I initially thought I could use the concepts of interpretivism and social constructionism interchangeably. However, Willis (2007) explains that aspects of paradigms function on various levels from overall to basic. Accordingly, a paradigm is a philosophy of science, but also involves the relevant social science theory and the corresponding research framework. I now view interpretivism on a level “closer located” to my overall paradigm (being qualitative) while social constructionism relates to a more basic epistemological level of my paradigm – the knowledge and how I come to know it (Willis, 2007). Social constructionism developed from interpretivism, but they do have distinct assumptions (Andrews, 2012). These differences were described earlier according to Terre Blanche et al. (2006b). Social constructionism regards

society to exist as reality that is both subjective and objective, while highlighting the role of interactions and of language as a medium of knowledge creation and social meaning making (Andrews, 2012). The language used in this thesis is characterised by researcher reflexivity – that may also be applied within social constructionism – to discover why certain experiences arise (Iosifides, 2018).

Nonetheless, though social constructionism construct phenomena, processes and social realities using discourse and language, some versions posit that we can only access various discursive constructions (Iosifides, 2018). Accordingly, we can never access the causal procedures, social conditions and processes that exist and affect phenomena independently of how we may think of, conceptualise and describe them linguistically. In a similar limiting manner, some versions of interpretivism reduce reality to meaning and interpretation, while discarding causal thinking and prioritising agential action and subjectivity. Critical realism provides ways in which to deal with these limitations, because a valuable assumption is that we can describe experiences using causal language (Easton, 2010). The pertinent question involves how the choices we make on ontological, epistemological and methodological levels may improve our ability to explain and provide answers that are meaningful to the research question (Iosifides, 2018). We do so guided by the belief that such choices will produce better interpretations of phenomena (Easton, 2010). Iosifides (2018, p. 94) states “There are no separate qualitative and quantitative paradigms and epistemologies”, meaning that different methods are not linked to particular epistemological assumptions by any indispensable and inherent linkages or connections. This view facilitates new ways of human understanding, avoiding the creation of dichotomies between qualitative and quantitative methods that may turn out be unproductive (Lim & Wieling, 2004). Easton (2010, p. 119) describes the epistemology of critical realism as an “eclectic realist/interpretive” one.

I use a version of interpretivism that also explores why certain meanings, beliefs and interpretations arise (Iosifides, 2018). Hence, at a foundational level my epistemology is social constructionism (Andrews, 2012; Galbin, 2015; Kham, 2013), which I view to be located in the broader qualitative traditions of interpretivism from which social constructionism developed (Andrews, 2012). However, I overcome the

ontological and epistemological limitations in some versions of social constructionism and interpretivism by using the metatheoretical assumptions of critical realism (in section 3.2.1.1), as suggested by Iosifides (2018). Accordingly, these allowed me to retain the valuable contributions of constructionist and interpretive approaches, while not moving back to the positivist approaches. Since the assumption of a real world that exists out there cannot be proved or refuted, we behave as if it is was so (Easton, 2010). Different appropriate approaches and strategies are therefore applied methodologically to investigate the various facets and aspects of processes, phenomena and social reality (Iosifides, 2018).

Thus, we can no longer say that the world is entirely socially constructed (Easton, 2010). Nonetheless, “socially constructed authenticity” focusses on how people interpret facts about authenticity (Lehman et al., 2018, p. 3), while our perception of authenticity is influenced by both individual and social factors (Kreuzbauer & Keller, 2017). Hence, both my language as researcher and that of participants played a role in coming to know how authenticity is developed. Heidegger similarly regarded understanding and language as essential parts of human existence (Heidegger 1953/1996). Therefore, being was also accessed by considering the modes of being that participants revealed during interviews according to Heidegger in terms of its temporal, historical and equiprimordial characteristics (see section 3.3.3). I paid attention to particular words they used when talking about authenticity, in trying to understand the phenomenon (Lehman et al., 2018) as it develops across time. To develop and balance my understanding of the phenomenon, I had to link intuition to intellectual thoroughness during interpretation – what Anderson (2004) calls an epistemology of the heart. As alluded to, while I was making sense of experiences I assumed it impossible to suspend my preunderstandings (Kafle, 2011). Instead, I believe the world into which we enter already had and always has meaning (Laverty, 2003), congruent to social constructionist assumptions. Therefore, it was important to describe the metatheories and constructs in the previous chapter, as these allude to existing meaning and pre-knowledge relevant to guiding how I understand data generated in this research. Furthermore, I deem it necessary to consider the influence of my axiology on the research (Kafle, 2011). This reflects my values in what I already believe to be truth and thus employ as starting point.

3.2.1.3 Axiology

Axiology describes the standard against which claims of ontology and epistemology are evaluated and, with regard to literature, includes the influence of values and views of the researcher while generating knowledge (Kafle, 2011). I recognise the impact of my background and experiences as shaping my values, which are important during interpretation (Creswell, 2009). Further, understandings gained in practice in the disciplinary contexts (well-being and career counselling) shaped my axiology as well, and lead me to believe that authenticity inevitably includes spiritual matters as described by Hiles (2002).

I attempt to understand a reality requiring both an empathic subjective stance (Snape & Spencer, 2003) and a more distant suspicious stance (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006), precisely by considering my preunderstanding or presuppositions relating to developing authenticity. I posit that each person holds an internal subjective reality of what it means to become authentic or to develop authenticity. We evaluate such subjective reality against the characteristics of our own personality as is in the moment, in which case our perceptions around how to develop authenticity may only be subjective. However, the characteristics we associate with being authentic are already present in the universe as existential possibilities, if we so choose, to make them part of (or to make them more dominant parts of) our personalities. These characteristics of authenticity represent a *standard* for developing authenticity with its origin in something *outside* or *beyond* the self, but of which we have always been part (whether we were aware of this connection or not). Herein lies the more sceptic or more objective perspective, as we evaluate who we want to become – on our journey toward developing authenticity – against standards *outside* of the *current* self.

Snape and Spencer (2003) describe an empathic subjective stance as an interactive or intersubjective one, influenced by the subjective relationship that plays out between researcher and participant, during which the researcher displays empathy. A more distant suspicious stance is adopted if reality is believed to consist of social constructions, so that methodologies are employed in which the researcher can deconstruct accounts of reality (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Such a stance is

commonly reflective of critical theorists such as Hans-Georg Gadamer. In the phenomenon being studied, the women's realities about authenticity do consist of subjective experiences. Lehman et al. (2018) similarly explain how authenticity is evaluated subjectively, in most contemporary cases. However, there are also more objective elements to these experiences (Bonthuys et al., 2017), given the interactional (Connelly & Turel, 2016; Kernis, 2003; Kernis & Goldman, 2006) and beyond-self aspects involved when developing authenticity (Klenke, 2007). Hence, I opine that the nature of the participants' realities is such that making sense of their experiences required both stances. I needed the empathic stance to be able to describe my understanding of the subjective experiences that they have of their external world, while the more distant stance allowed me to interpret this understanding in the context within which experiences occur (Kelly, 2006c; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Therefore, I identify with both the interpretive and social constructionist stances (Iosifides, 2018). However, I also identify with the axiology of critical realism – in relation to these two stances (Iosifides, 2018) – which is emancipatory (Easton, 2009), hence transformative and characterised by reflexivity (Bhaskar, 2009).

In the preliminary research, which in part served to explore definitions of authenticity, I came across several viewpoints. What resonated with me most, was a dictionary account of the word *authentic* – traced from *original*, derived from *doer* or *master*, formed from *self* and based on *doer* or *being.* Accordingly, being authentic refers to something that takes on the authority or power of its original creator (http://wordinfo.info/unit/3771/ip:16). If it is accepted that we are part of something bigger than the self, we would ultimately have to trace our authentic selves back to whatever source that represents for us in our lives.

3.2.2 Methodological assumptions

The methodological assumptions reflect how to proceed in getting to know reality in a practical manner (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Methodology denotes the general approach adopted by the researcher to conduct the research, which dictates the specific tools or strategies selected to collect or interpret data (Leedy & Ormrod,

2010). I applied hermeneutic phenomenology (Laverty, 2003) as inspired by its congruence to my hermeneutic ontology and social constructionist epistemology. I also integrated the transpersonal approach in the overall methodological approach to this study, which allowed me to include as data my personal transformation (Anderson, 2015). Thus, in applying a transpersonal approach in this study, I used reflexivity to enhance the rigour of the qualitative methodology (Kitto et al., 2008; Koch & Harrington, 1998). This approach highlights the impact of the researcher's actions, viewpoints and methods on data and the findings (Kitto et al., 2008). Reflexivity denotes the inclusion of ongoing self-appraisal, reflection and self-critique while doing research (Koch & Harrington, 1998). There is close relation between the transpersonal methodological perspective and self-reflective strategies, as these welcome my personal and professional capacities into the research process (Anderson, 2015). However, as researcher I preferred to highlight the transpersonal approach as pertinent to the research methodology adopted in this study, for two reasons. First, this approach highlights consistent reflection on my personal change dynamics experienced throughout the research process, and the use of such personal transformations as data. Second, it allows for a writing style that reveals my opinions and interpretations of every aspect in the research process in an upfront and consistent manner (Anderson, 2015).

Next, I explicate how I applied hermeneutic phenomenology integrated with a transpersonal approach in my methodological framework. The methodological approaches adopted in this study operate within the particular assumptions of the related ontology, epistemology and axiology as discussed in the previous sections. Research methods stem from the methodology and denote the practical components of how the research phenomenon was studied (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). The research methods are afforded detailed attention later in Chapter Four.

3.3 HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY

Existential or hermeneutic phenomenology is regarded to have originated with Heidegger. However, understanding into phenomenology and hermeneutic

phenomenology is not static, but always evolving (Laverty, 2003). Pure phenomenology is aimed at describing the meanings people have of their lived experiences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). It is generally suitable to make meaning of perspectives, perceptions and understandings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The study of interpretation, or of meaning, is termed hermeneutics (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Hermeneutics was originally used to interpret Biblical texts, then broadened to the interpretation of other texts, literature and human experience (DuBose, 2010a). Where phenomenology posits that meaning derives from lived experience of existing in the world, hermeneutics contend that meaning originates from being aware of contexts as well as the rational relationships between the contexts and texts (Vannini, 2008).

Phenomenology is a descriptive endeavour undertaken from the phenomenological attitude as ensured by phenomenological reduction (Finlay, 2013). The phenomenological attitude involves the *bracketing* of preconceptions of theory and philosophy (Brooke, 2010). The nature of human experiences is understood as relayed by participants (Creswell, 2009), but the researcher sets aside personal experiences and previous theoretical allegiances, so as to understand participant experiences (Terre Blanche et al., 2006a). On the contrary, hermeneutic phenomenology deems it impossible to suspend one's preunderstandings when making meaning of experiences (Kafle, 2011). This is because it is assumed that the world into which we enter already had, and always has, meaning (DuBose, 2010b). Nonetheless, hermeneutics and phenomenology both hold that meaning is constructed and renegotiated actively through interaction with others, open to interpretation and to change, and varies across groups, contexts and occasions of speech (Vannini, 2008).

I recall how I derive meaning in my life. Emulating the hermeneutic phenomenological way, I tend to consider a multitude of interpretations, but with the aim to arrive at the best possible one (Kafle, 2011; Tzu et al., 2015). I also understand myself by considering my developmental areas as reflected by my interactions with others. As alluded to, various individuals contributed to developing hermeneutic phenomenology. I summarise and compare works of Dilthey, Husserl,

Heidegger and Gadamer, for each of them contributed significantly to the way in which hermeneutic phenomenology is understood and applied in research today. In the sections to follow, I demonstrate how I identify with assumptions in the contributions, and how these are applied in this study.

3.3.1 Contributions of Wilhelm Dilthey to hermeneutics

Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911) was influenced by the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) on textual analysis (DuBose, 2010a). Schleiermacher's work was characterised by transcendental philosophy of going beyond consciousness, in search of a creative power that operates in an unconscious yet integrated manner – bringing into being within us the whole world (Dilthey, 1900/1972). Schleiermacher viewed the primary objective of hermeneutics as preventing misunderstanding between the intended meanings of the author and the interpreter's understanding of what text means (DuBose, 2010a). Dilthey and others contributed to the tradition of hermeneutics (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004) and introduced it into philosophy (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Human experiences should be central in hermeneutical analysis that may therefore be used beyond just texts (Dilthey, 1900/1972). Dilthey maintains that an event and a text are equally meaningful (Gadamer, 1975/2004).

Understanding is the process used to make sense of the psychic reality as expressed by the sensory signs that we receive from others in the external world (Dilthey, 1900/1972). Accordingly, our understanding is limited if interest in the experience of the speaker is limited. Likewise, in this study I must be genuinely interested in the research topic, if I wish to attain an understanding of how developing authenticity is experienced from within the lived experiences of these women. My evolving interest has been explained in Chapter One. Dilthey opines scientific knowledge requires that one detaches from one's history (Gadamer 1975/2004), an assumption I however do not share. I do share Dilthey's immense longing to understand lived experience (Barua, 2007). Further, Dilthey stated that our perceptions of things as acquired through the senses and from others in the world, come to completion when we reconstruct and translate such things by way of

our personal sense of life (Dilthey, 1900/1972). I infer from this view that I must understand myself so as to understand participants (Kernis, 2003), while at the same time I understand myself by understanding the women in this study. Dilthey, on his part, inspired the work of others as well.

3.3.2 Edmund Husserl's contribution to phenomenology

Dilthey was a predecessor of Husserl (1859–1938), who is renowned for what is known as transcendental phenomenology (Barua, 2007). Husserl's phenomenology is descriptive (Chari, 2014) and his central doctrine is that consciousness is intentional (Husserl, 1936/1970). He gave special attention to perception that in terms of the intentionality principle, always occurs in relation to something and involves things that we are conscious of (Barua, 2007). Husserl (1936/1970) described how perceptions may be understood through the subjective phenomenon of kinestheses that is different to, yet belonging to, physical movements of the body. Accordingly, we can view what shows itself in different ways and alter our perspectives, so that the living body may exhibit itself in multiple ways. Carman (1999) opines that Husserl's theory of intentionality neglects perceptual experiences as influenced by worldly structures, which he claimed to discard as insignificant. According to Husserl, we understand the true nature of things by employing the method of bracketing (Adams & Van Manen, 2008). However, I submit it to be impossible for me to experience the meaning in participant stories by the bracketing of my own experience and preconceptions. I rather identify with the hermeneutic turn to phenomenology in this regard – described in Heidegger's contribution below.

Nonetheless, Husserl (1936/1970) also provides as valuable to this study the explanation of the phenomenon of altering validity. Accordingly, the way in which something exhibits itself is coupled with associated perceptions and background intentions – correlating with possible resultant events that correspondingly belong to it. Husserl departed from the recognised structure he had of consciousness (in terms of noesis/noema), toward the notion of becoming spiritual (Barua, 2007). The evolution of phenomenology in this way holds that an understanding of what is meaningful to a person, requires understanding of behavioural actions as well as

thoughts, emotions and perceptions (Theron, 2009). Accordingly, each person must also understand these in themselves, for we understand ourselves through our personal experience. As we continuously perceive the world, we are connected with others, with our world perception never complete and requiring constant correction – such as understanding something seen from a distance, by viewing it up close (Husserl, 1936/1970). Perceptions of authenticity may influence behaviour (Connelly & Turel, 2016; Ménard & Brunet, 2011). Husserl's views on perceptions – having different perceptions and being able to alter perceptions and perspectives – are of particular value to this study. These link to the ability to manage perceptions in one's attempt to attain and retain authenticity. This ability has been established as made possible through the mindfulness component of authenticity (see Chapter Two). Further, the aspect of intentionality (Brooke, 2010) is a major component of purposeful living that is essential to spiritual well-being (DuBose, 2010b).

3.3.3 Martin Heidegger's ontological contribution

Heidegger is regarded as the founder of hermeneutic phenomenology (Kafle, 2011; Laverty, 2003), or phenomenological hermeneutics (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). Heidegger presented an ontology of *Da-sein*, meaning "being-in-the-world" (Bailey, 2010, p. 46; Barua, 2007). Where Husserl emphasised the understanding of beings, Heidegger concentrated on *Da-sein* (Laverty, 2003) or the meaning of being (Barua, 2007). According to Heidegger (1953/2010) the problem related to ontology is that the type of being has no adequately clear definition. *Being* takes on the meaning of *Reality*, and for us to solve the ontological problem of the concept of Reality, we must understand that "Reality is not only *one* kind of Being *among* others", but connected ontologically to the greater whole (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 187). Heidegger interpreted the experience and individual as co-constructions of each other, so that one cannot be separated from the other (Laverty, 2003). He believed we cannot understand the world without being attached to it (Chari, 2014). *Da-sein* denotes the being of a particular kind of being, a human being's being, and not the life of just any entity (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Accordingly, it also refers to being's different possible kinds of being, who is concerned about things, while possibilities of existence are either being itself, or not being itself.

Heidegger further emphasises the need for interpretation (Davidsen, 2013). He regards understanding as the basis for any such interpretation (Chari, 2014) and views language as an important part of human existence to denote understanding meaning (Heidegger 1953/1996). In relation to Heidegger's assumptions, Barua (2007) describes that description is interpretation, and that human awareness is interpretive. The interpretive process is a circular one, in which we consider time's historical contexts so as to understand the entire experience better (Chari, 2014). The meaning of being is addressed through how *Da-sein* shows itself in the world, how we interact with the world and relate to it every day (Heidegger, 1953/1996). With this notion comes the concept of intentionality, about which Heidegger differed from his teacher, Husserl (Brooke, 2010). Heidegger's doctrine is one of care (Barua, 2007; Dewar, 2016; Kreber et al., 2007), and he viewed intentionality as an experience present in each moment, which is characterised by care – a primordial state of being (DuBose, 2010b). To Heidegger, primordial relates to an ontological interpretation that takes into account *the totality* of presuppositions or *unity* of possible beings that a person may take on (Heidegger, 1953/ 1996). In this context primordial denotes harmony, being at one, or the original order of things (Madden, 2010). Care, concern and moods imply ways in which we engage with the world (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Accordingly, mood or attunement is what lets *Da-Sein* know or understand where it is in terms of the possibility it has adopted of being itself or not being itself.

Our way of being in this world is further equiprimordial, meaning that *Da-sein* reveals itself simultaneously in terms of worldly existence, relational existence and unique self (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Accordingly, each affects and are being affected by the other two – understanding one requires understanding of the others. Heidegger believed the world into which we enter or with which we engage already had, and always has meaning and calls precisely on our intentions (DuBose, 2010b). *Da-sein* may choose for itself a mode of authentic or inauthentic existence (Heidegger, 1953/2010). This choice includes taking responsibility for that of which you have been the author, or have created in your life (Baron & Parent, 2015; Heidegger, 1953/2010). The spiritual origin of *being* is regarded by Heidegger as residing in the recognition that authenticity results from individuals' openness to their own being

(Barua, 2007). The “they-self” is inauthentic most of the time (Heidegger, 1953/2010) and denotes other people with whom we share the world (Regan, 2012). In order for *Da-sein* to discover itself or to turn back to self, this possibility must be showed to *Da-sein* by means of a call of conscience (Heidegger, 1953/1996).

The call of conscience has power in that it appeals to the self very clearly, because it is able to drown out the voice of the “they” (Padgett, 2007). Hence, to move toward authenticity *Da-sein* must stop hearing the “they-self” to hear its own self (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 250). The responsibility to hear the call of conscience lies with the self (Padgett, 2007). Taking over each other’s responsibilities or possibilities diminishes authenticity (Kreber et al., 2007). Similarly, when we lack awareness and ownership of our own possibilities – handing these over to others – such mode of being is inauthentic also (Dewar, 2016). We are preoccupied with understanding ourselves or our way of being (Yagi, 2009), and it appears that becoming authentic is achieved by the smallest turn away from the “they”, back toward the self’s own potentiality for authentic being (Padgett, 2007). When we compare ourselves with everything, we drift toward inauthentic being (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Nonetheless, authentically being oneself is not a state separate from the world (Dewar, 2016), but a modification of the “they” of which one has already been part of (Heidegger, 1953/1996).

3.3.4 Heidegger versus Husserl

Husserl’s phenomenology is descriptive while Heidegger’s is interpretive (Reiners, 2012). Heidegger’s philosophy is not based on consciousness, as is the case in the doctrine of Husserl (Barua, 2007). Husserl viewed transcendence as separate from, or beyond, the concepts of human consciousness (Husserl, 1936/1970) – a view later reversed by the contributions of Heidegger (DuBose, 2010c). Heidegger views consciousness as a possible mode of human existence (Heidegger, 1953/1996). He viewed transcendence as already and continuously happening, so that states of consciousness are linked to the world, context bound and co-constructed by worldly experiences (Heidegger, as cited in DuBose, 2010c). Some of the contributions of Heidegger and Husserl to phenomenology are compared (table 3.1), with sources provided in brackets and properly cited afterward.

Table 3.1: Heidegger versus Husserl

Heidegger	Husserl
Understanding is made possible by the way beings are in the world (1).	Understanding resides in the way in which we know the world (6).
Asks what the meaning of being is (3).	Asks what can be known by persons/ how do humans know? (2), or "what it is for us to be conscious of anything?" (3) (Barua, 2007, p. 2)
Humans are understood as concerned about their way of being (1).	Focusses on knowing the world (6) – understands human beings predominantly as knowers (4).
Philosophy not grounded in transcendental consciousness (3).	Philosophy grounded in transcendental consciousness (3).
Consciousness not to be separate from the world (1), and is formed by past lived experience (4).	Transcendence viewed as that which is beyond constructs of human consciousness (6).
Departs from traditional descriptions of events as consciousness-centric (3). Phenomenology is being-centric, characterised by concern (3).	Focus on consciousness – conscious experiences (2). Phenomenology is consciousness-centric, characterised by a detached stance (3).
Intentionality is viewed as less important (5). "Conscience is not a fact that occurs and is occasionally objectively present" (1) (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 249).	Consciousness is intentional. Emotions, thoughts and perceptions are intentional – awareness is directed at some object or occurrence (2).
Being is not just being as it pertains to human beings, but may also denote being as it pertains to the world (6).	Perception occurs primarily in relation to the living body (6).
Phenomenology is interpretive – beyond just description, extracting meaning underlying everyday experiences (2).	Phenomenology is descriptive – describing views on experiences (2).
Presuppositions are not suspended (2).	All suppositions are suspended (bracketing) (2). Objectivity of an object, which equates the experience to provide its own meaning (3).
Attempts to escape the subject/object view (3).	Phenomenology is conceptualised subjectively (3). The meaning of individual experience is the foundation of phenomenology (2).
Both idealism and realism fall short in its interpretation of Reality (1).	Experiences understood within idealist framework (3).
Sources: (1) Heidegger, 1953/1996; (2) Reiners, 2012; (3) Barua, 2007; (4) Laverty, 2003; (5) Overgaard, 2004; (6) Heidegger, 1953/2010; (6) Husserl, 1936/1970.	

3.3.5 Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy

Gadamer (1900–2002) aimed to discover the nature of human understanding – how humans come to understand their world (Gadamer, 1975/2004). He followed both Husserl and Heidegger in their work on phenomenology (Chari, 2014). Gadamer – as did Heidegger – saw phenomenology as becoming hermeneutical when it takes on interpretive qualities, as opposed to its solely descriptive ones (Barua, 2007). Shared also with Heidegger are the concepts of history and tradition, regarded as critical to our exploration of an event (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Accordingly, these provide the foundation for the interpretive way in which we are connected to others and our cultural history – particularly through dialogue. Building on the work of Heidegger (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004), Gadamer described the interpretive process by means of the term hermeneutic circle (Chari, 2014). Thinking historically entails moving between (reconciling) past concepts and personal thinking (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Gadamer fully realised Heidegger's emphasis on the need for understanding through interpretation (Davidsen, 2013). Interpretation depends on the questions asked, while meaning results from dialogue or interaction between the interpreter and that being interpreted (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Significant in Gadamer's contribution is his focus on being and the ability to interpret both understanding and misunderstanding as means for valuable communication in people (Regan, 2012). Gadamer had interest in understanding the subject matter of another through language (Chari, 2014).

Interpretation reflects a circle completed by the exchange of question and answer, attained by means of language (Gadamer, 1975/2004). As alluded to earlier, it was Heidegger who introduced into phenomenology interpretation by means of language (Davidsen, 2013). When we converse with each other, the language used contains its own truth that it brings into existence and the understanding that follows, or not, constitutes an event that happens to us (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Discourse and language play very important roles in how authenticity is socially constructed (Lehman et al., 2018). Language transforms object into words, with the hermeneutical experience reflecting the relationship between thought and speech, and camouflaging the role that language plays in thought (Gadamer, 1975/2004).

Gadamer viewed hermeneutics as enabling the convergence of horizons – merging Heidegger's situatedness of understanding and Schleiermacher's focus on author intentions when interpreting (DuBose, 2010a). Horizons relate to the idea of *situation* by denoting awareness of how our history affects us, awareness of our situation and of aspects that both prescribe and restrict our possibility for understanding (Gadamer, 1975/2004). A horizon allows someone to see everything from a specific vantage point, but also to see beyond what is nearest to you (Laverty, 2003). This concept involves current perspectives that may be widened by the things we experience (Chari, 2014; Gadamer, 1975/2004). Hence, it does not denote a fixed boundary, but changes with us and calls us toward further advancement, representing the pre-given or presupposed foundation to our experience, as influenced by our historical whole (Gadamer, 1975/2004).

Gadamer regarded prejudice as a condition for understanding, in that it is believed impossible to detach the self from one's current situation by merely taking on an open attitude (Laverty, 2003). As part of understanding one must work through preconceptions (Regan, 2012). It is, in fact, precisely our preunderstandings that we use to access the real meaning revealed by text (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Our experiences and dialogues shape our interpretations in the present (Thrift & Amundson, 2007). Hence, the past is needed to shape horizons in the present, and in this meeting of horizons, understanding is made possible (Gadamer, 1975/2004). The interpreter's horizon and the phenomenon being explored are combined in the hermeneutic process (Dowling, 2007). Ultimately, all understanding is self-understanding (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Hence, if I am my understanding as asserted by Gadamer and Heidegger (Davidsen, 2013), I understand phenomena by also understanding myself. Such understanding is never-ending (Chari, 2014) since it is impossible to attain accurate and complete interpretation. Therefore, my understanding and interpretation of self in relation to developing authenticity is a necessary part of the research project, and it is ongoing and ever unfolding.

3.3.6 Applying hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology to this study

Hermeneutic phenomenology posits that human beings are interpretation and they

are mirrored in human science, making it possible for others to reveal themselves and to be understood (Benner, 2008). I therefore attempted to understand participants' lived experience through the mode of being in the world and within the context of individuals' (myself and participants) situatedness or background (Laverty, 2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology assumes that data cannot be free of preunderstandings (Kafle, 2011). In fact, hermeneutic phenomenology regards the researcher's assumptions as significant to the interpretive process and likely to impact aspects of the research process (Laverty, 2003). In this vein, I did not suspend my presuppositions, previous experiences, expectations and thinking, but rather make them explicit as I go along. Examples that I described in Chapter One clearly influenced my research choice, focus and methodological decisions from the onset. Hermeneutic phenomenology allowed me to understand experiences of being as these unfold through the process of interpretation (Laverty, 2003). Research from a hermeneutic phenomenological approach is rooted in subjective understanding, and its epistemology posits that meaning making occurs by means of subjective experience and perceptions (Kafle, 2011). Accordingly, this approach posits that true objective nature of a phenomenon, as realised by a person, is to be found beneath subjective experience.

Heidegger opined that the interpretive process in hermeneutical endeavours reveals ways of authentic being. Knowledge and experience about the phenomenon led me, as I tried to discover what participants had to conceal and reveal about what is to be known (DuBose, 2010c). This approach helped me to obtain new understandings of the research topic, allowing for the appreciation of text in a way that considerably transformed my perspectives (Tzu et al., 2015). The approaches to data collection and analysis that resulted from hermeneutic phenomenological methodology, become operational in the research design as presented in the next chapter. Congruent to the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, I used narrative interviews to elicit lived experience in context, and applied a hermeneutic phenomenological analysis to construct meaning from the data.

Next, I explicate the transpersonal research approach that I applied in combination with the hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

3.4 TRANSPERSONAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Various strategies may be employed in qualitative research to enhance transparency with regard to how researcher preconceptions, evolving meaning and growth throughout the research affect all the research decisions and findings. Anderson (2006) specifically describes transpersonal methodologies known variously as personal research and writing, autoethnography and so forth, which require enhanced self-reflection and increased emphasis on emotion. The main elements of this transpersonal analytic strategy include the following: reflexivity; that the researcher is a complete part of the phenomenon being studied; dialogue with respondents beyond self; dedication to theoretical analysis and that the researcher's self is visible throughout the narrative (Anderson, 2006). I employed reflexivity to strengthen the rigour of the applied qualitative methodology (Kitto et al., 1998) in this study. Reflexivity means that the researcher includes continuous reflection, self-appraisal and self-critique while conducting research, and that such critically self-revealing approach results in plausible research (Koch & Harrington, 1998). Reflexivity furthermore emphasises the influence of researchers' viewpoints, actions, interactions and selected methods on data and on the generation of findings (Kitto et al., 2008). The transpersonal perspective to methodology relates closely to such a self-reflective approach, as it invites the researcher's professional expertise and personal capacities – including intuition – to the exploration of the research topic (Anderson, 2015). However, this perspective goes a step further than just applying self-reflection as a strategy to enhance transparency and rigour, but seeks out the researcher's experiences as part of the data and meaning making. The researcher's transformation becomes key.

My choice of the transpersonal approach – over, for example, autoethnography – also lies in the nature of the phenomenon being studied and its importance to me. Autoethnography also allows one to bring personal experience, understanding and beliefs of the explored phenomenon into the research process (Anderson, 2006). However, autoethnography denotes a method of research (Chang, 2016) that links the personal and autobiographical to social, cultural and political aspects (Ellis, 2008). Furthermore, in autoethnography researchers are intentionally made

participants while they interview and conduct ethnographic studies of other people (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2016). It was never my intention to be the focus of this study, but to understand the phenomenon in others. However, given the transpersonal (Diaz, 2010; Hartelius et al., 2007) and relational nature of the phenomenon (Dewar, 2016; Glavas, 2016; Heidegger, 1953/2010; Kernis & Goldman, 2006), I could only understand it in others by reflecting on, and understanding myself in the context of the research phenomenon (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Benner, 2008; Kernis, 2003; Theron, 2009). Hence, my realisation only later on in this study that I was in fact an *additional participant.*

True to notions of Hiles (2002) and Valverde (2016), my exploration into being human did eventually produce questions of a spiritual nature, which were significant in understanding experiences, behaviour and development. Anderson (2015) explained that even qualitative methods may be insufficient when studying complex issues influenced by experiences of the researcher. I therefore do not view the matter as transpersonal versus autoethnography, but rather that the transpersonal approach was metaphysically more congruent to my research beliefs, knowledge assumptions and primary research objective. In my study it was the anticipated personal transformation and the philosophical as well as spiritual orientations to developing authenticity, which led me to the transpersonal approach. This approach also enabled me to modify my qualitative method (i.e., hermeneutic phenomenology) as suggested by Anderson (2015). Development of transformative approaches to research most notably come from Anderson and Braud (2011) within transpersonal psychology. Consideration is given to how transpersonal psychology developed as a movement within human sciences.

3.4.1 Transpersonal psychology and its metatheoretical origins

Transpersonal psychology, or the *fourth force,* seeks to conquer the limitations it perceives in Freudian *(first force)*, behaviourist *(second force)* and humanistic *(third force)* schools of thought (Diaz, 2010). It finds contributions from Victor Frankl, Rollo May, Carl Jung, Roberto Assagioli, Abraham Maslow, William James and many others, as it relates to the human being's sacred internal dimension (Anderson &

Braud, 2011; Gleig, 2010). Transpersonal psychologists also include Ken Wilber, Christina Grof and Roger Walsh. They expanded the meaning of “human” to include the connection people may have with divine or “higher” facets of themselves and their world (Spaeth, 2010). Transpersonal psychology is holistic or integrative (Hartelius et al., 2007) and overlaps considerably with humanistic-existential psychology (Spaeth, 2010). Anderson and Braud (2011) stated that transpersonal psychology involves spiritual and transpersonal experiences on individual, community and global levels. Lajoie and Shapiro (1992) stated the themes that occur most across various definitions of transpersonal psychology are ultimate or highest potential, states of consciousness, beyond personal self and spiritual as well as transcendence themes. Transcendence and harmony can be achieved through spiritual development (Valverde, 2016), with key concerns being the attainment of well-being, optimal health and higher consciousness (Raab, 2013). Techniques to realise transpersonal potentials have been refined through history, constituting the reflective heart of eminent religious traditions that open up developmental possibilities (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). Accordingly, in relation to the nature and potentials of the mind, it is assumed that consciousness in its usual state is suboptimal, but that the mind can be trained toward transpersonal potentials or optimal consciousness.

Transpersonal studies aim to bring about in a person’s life a balanced development of social, physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual aspects, as well as creative expression (McCaslin, 2008). The understanding and cultivation of growth into higher potentials not only involve individuals, but also involve communities where transformation is influenced by spiritual and transpersonal experiences (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Hartelius et al., 2007). However, any theoretical model toward such understanding is merely a temporary estimate and integration of what is known at a specific time and therefore, not capable of rendering an exhaustive description of such reality (Grof et al., 2008). Therefore, transpersonal researchers value classical metatheoretical contributions from various spiritual and indigenous traditions, regarding these as wisdom that remains relevant as time goes by (Braud, 1998). Transpersonal psychology serves as cosmic process to complement Western problem-solving strategies that rely solely on controlling and manipulating the

external world (Grof et al., 2008). Walsh and Vaughan (1993) discussed how transpersonal practices are brought about by transcendence. Accordingly, the most significant breakthrough in western psychology may turn out to be recognising old wisdom, rather than discovering new knowledge. Applying transpersonal research approaches from within transpersonal psychology, Anderson and Braud (2011) suggest integrating these or parts thereof, into other research approaches, to understand complex research topics.

3.4.2 Transpersonal approach

Transpersonal approaches focus on multiple or complementary ways of knowing and may be applied to research ventures throughout human sciences (Anderson & Braud, 2011). The world is explored from an open-minded approach, not restrained by strict observance of existing paradigms, because reality is regarded considerably more complex than can be described by any theory (Grof et al., 2008). The transpersonal approach is pertinent to the research methodology in this study as it highlights consistent reflection on my personal change.

The transpersonal approach to research involves the qualities that the researcher brings to the inquiry (Anderson, 2015; Raab, 2013), in seeking to understand aspects beyond the self (Diaz, 2010) and of human transformation (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Hartelius et al., 2007). The transpersonal approach posits that the researcher's personal transformation must be included as data throughout the study (Anderson, 2015). This approach facilitates rigour, transparency and critical substantiation of interpretations. I had to employ my professional know-how, capabilities and intuition, while engaging with the research topic (Anderson, 2015). I used my reflections of personal and professional experiences as data, and analysed, interpreted and integrated such data with the participant data gathered through the interviews (see Chapter Five). I had to accept the existence of multiple phenomenological states, experiences, circumstances and ways of being and non-being (Solowoniuk & Nixon, 2009).

Transpersonal methodology aspects further entail that researchers relate to

respondents in a transpersonal way (Anderson, 2015). This was made possible through practising such abilities as entering the women's experiences with what Suzuki (2010a) describes as a beginner's mind – an attitude of being open to learn about various possibilities. The transpersonal approach influenced the personally transparent writing style I adopted in this thesis and the way I approached theory (also see Chapter Four, section 4.8). It also affected the way I dealt with and interpreted data. The particular style of inquiry that suits research into the phenomenon is intuitive (Anderson & Braud, 2011) and its application is described in detail in Chapter Four.

Summatively, I employed transpersonal research qualities as recommended by Anderson (2015) during the inquiry as follows:

1) Both researcher- and participant transformation were tapped during the study, as reflected most clearly in Chapters Five to Seven.
2) Consideration was given to my professional expertise and personal capacities, including intuition, while exploring the research topic. For example, these were considered as reflected by the particular I/O psychology sub-disciplines in which I chose to make developing authenticity of particular relevance. Chapter One and Chapter Six contain detailed evidence of how I involved my professional and personal experiences. Personal capacities were more often considered as part of reflections, as included in all chapters, as well as my journal extracts.
3) I had to consciously reflect on and understand my own degree of psycho-spiritual growth, for I can only understand data according to my level of developmental awareness. I developed this understanding throughout this research project by reflecting on aspects such as my own spirituality as part of my developing authenticity. Evidence may be seen in this thesis in reflection sections usually toward the end of chapters, but also within chapters. For example, my evolving interest in this study in Chapter One and as personal data intermingled with participant data in Chapter Five.
4) I regarded the research encounter as sacred. Therefore, I employed critical spiritual values of humility, kindness, inclusion, compassion and generosity – cherishing what is valuable in the work of others while making my own

contributions to the overall context. I show how I employed these values while doing this study, particularly in Chapter Five, in how I relate to and identify with participant experiences.

I also had to take responsibility for my past, present and the future, by making choices and taking actions that contribute the best to the future (Anderson, 2015). An example of how I contributed the best to my future is that I chose to use my challenges (see Chapter One) as steppingstones to become, what I consider to be, my best-self. Part of my coping was to self-actualise by becoming an industrial psychologist. In having to deal with the work-life challenges I was led to self-exploration – questioning myself on how I coped. In doing so, I came to the realisation and belief that my challenges served a purpose. I developed an appreciation and compassion for whoever was involved in posing my challenges, and understood that I could not blame them for anything, because I acknowledged my part in what I was experiencing. Hence, I could let go of blame by taking responsibility (Gough, 2016). As described by Grof et al. (2008), self-exploration resulted in better adjustment than do externally imposed rules. I experienced this notion to be true in my life, before and during this research. When I was able to work through blame and resentment to feeling compassion toward others, I coped better with my own struggles. As such, and as expected in transpersonal research, I could apply these transformational experiences to understand the research phenomenon.

The transpersonal aspect to methodology complements the hermeneutic approach to phenomenology. Both allowed me to account for the influence of preunderstandings in the research process, for it is deemed impossible to suspend these when seeking to understand human nature. Both approaches employ the hermeneutic circle of interpretation. Further, since understanding a phenomenon requires for *being* to reveal itself (Heidegger, 1953/1996) through the facade of the personal identified facets of self (Anderson & Braud, 2011), these approaches work well together. The application of the transpersonal approach is described further in Chapter Four and pertains to how to use transpersonal research guidelines to relate to respondents in a transpersonal way.

One aspect that is core to the rigour of the research project, namely how I approached theory, was implicitly influenced by the methodologies I chose. It is the focus of the next discussion.

3.5 APPLICATION OF METHODOLOGY IN RELATION TO THEORY

The choices of methodology and research design decisions were informed by the philosophical stance or paradigmatic assumptions (Crotty, 1998; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), as described initially in this chapter. Although this thesis has a separate chapter reviewing the literature (see Chapter Two), the use of theory was essential from start to finish, as is typical to qualitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For example, the preliminary literature review informed the background and motivation, as well as the research objectives and placed the study in context. I considered the philosophical debates in phenomenology about bracketing – the omission of a priori theoretical involvement in the research process (Adams & Van Manen, 2008; Brooke, 2010). However, I rather resonated with the movement to social constructionist thinking, hermeneutic phenomenology and a transpersonal research orientation that allows for such preconceptions to be part of the research endeavor. My epistemological stance and methodological orientation require critical comparison with existing literature to construct meaning rigorously.

Moreover, transpersonal research methodology requires for intuitive reflection on theory to understand the research topic. Hence, literature was reviewed to find existing contributions linked to the research topic (Trafford & Leshem, 2008), including the search for suitable methodologies. Theory helped to build an understanding of the topic and to be sure that it could be investigated (Trafford & Leshem, 2008). Preunderstandings represent the level of knowledge with which someone enters the phenomenon to be understood (Laverty, 2003). Therefore, it was necessary to return to the literature when required to broaden my preunderstanding around the research topic (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). The use of theory aligns with the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, in which interpretations are made possible by preunderstanding – such prior understanding being subject to revision as the text was interpreted (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004).

Literature usage also aligns with the transpersonal approach that involves the transformation or enhancement of understanding of the research topic (Anderson, 2015). Intuitive inquiry calls for reflecting on the relevant theoretical literature. Doing so helped me to better understand myself and therefore the participants' developing authenticity. The literature reviews inevitably aided in my consistent self-reflection throughout the study – through facilitating my conscious and unconscious self-exploration while reading on transpersonal psychology, authenticity, well-being and other relevant topics. Some of these principles also resonated with the way in which I have dealt with past challenges, as I allude to throughout the narrative in this thesis.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter contained the methodological framework to this study, which I applied to construct a framework for developing authenticity. The methodology was influenced by the philosophical foundations underpinning this research, as described first in this chapter. Answering the research question that was formulated to help me attain the research objectives, required the integration of hermeneutic phenomenology and transpersonal research approaches. These two were found to be complementary as described above. The approaches differed notably in that the transpersonal approach required the inclusion of data about my transformation experienced as the researcher, which was part of the data collection, analysis and interpretation. Thus, yes my objective was to understand participant experiences. However, I need to understand myself to make meaning of how they develop authenticity, while their experiences allow me to understand myself as well. As I wrote this chapter, it dawned on me that I am an *additional participant* in this study. This realisation once again points to the relational element characteristic to meaning making in both methodological approaches, as it became clear in this chapter. Overall, I have achieved the objective of the chapter – to describe the methodological framework and to explain the need to integrate the research approaches as described. This chapter contributes to the whole thesis in the way I intended, especially by way of my contribution on a methodological level. Chapter Four follows, presenting the research design and giving more attention to the methods that were applied congruent to the methodological framework presented.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four provides the research design, which constituted the operational map for executing this study and explains how the phenomenon was studied practically (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Schensul (2008) describes research design to involve actions undertaken during the research, including aspects of the study community, the unit of analysis, methods, dissemination, as well as the reasoning behind these. The research design also describes the form of data to collect and data analysis – all concerning the research objectives that had to be achieved (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In relation to the research problem and objectives, the strategies for inquiry and particular research methods are therefore considered as the operational plan for the study (Creswell, 2009). Elements involved in choosing this plan include the paradigms and philosophical assumptions adopted (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) as well as the methodological framework discussed in Chapter Three.

In this chapter, I commence with a focus on the type of study design being qualitative, describe the research context and procedure next and then detail the research methods, as constituting the research design.

4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

I chose a qualitative research design to explore the complex phenomenon of developing authenticity. This design is suitable to the meta-scientific assumptions explained in Chapter Three, because the qualitative inquiry process is interpretive, holistic and produces contextual information (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Accordingly, I was required to be open-minded, to become immersed in the complex research situation and to interact with participants. In qualitative research, the design develops, evolves and is adapted as the study unfolds (Durrheim, 2006). Hence, qualitative research allows for flexibility in the order of research steps, design, focus, measurement instruments and emerging interpretations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe that the most critical features of qualitative research are studying behaviour as it happened naturally while considering situational aspects as well. Accordingly, the focus is on the process of why and how actions happened.

Data collection is from the participant as the primary source (Yin, 2011), and a deeper understanding of actions is obtained employing detailed, rich narratives (Durrheim, 2006). The researcher is concerned about the perspectives of participants, how they understand and ascribe meaning to experiences (Yin, 2011), while it is assumed that multiple perspectives exist (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The qualitative nature of the study imposes typically strong restrictions on the generalisability of findings so that the researcher aims to ensure transferability instead (Kelly, 2006a; Yin, 2011). Transferability and the strategies employed to ensure it are presented later in this chapter (see section 4.9.2). As researcher, I was the primary research instrument regarding data collection (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). The design allowed for the research objectives to be attained by sampling fewer participants, best suitable to enhance understanding of the explored phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The reasoning required for data analysis is primarily inductive and involved drawing inferences from data collected or based on specific observations (Creswell, 2009). Data analysis was considerably subjective, where the patterns reflected in data were scrutinised and subjectively identified (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) – corresponding to the philosophical assumptions described in the previous chapter.

The methodology component involved particular strategies of enquiry and the distinct research methods required to turn approach into practice (Creswell, 2009). Practical application of the methodological directive includes the strategies followed to ensure ethical research of high quality. Qualitative research designs offer various approaches, which may be employed toward achieving one or more purposes relating to description, interpretation, verification and evaluation of phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Within the qualitative research design, the guiding interpretive paradigms, hermeneutic phenomenology and transpersonal methodological approaches to research are of relevance. These were described in

Chapter Three and informed the research methods to follow here under section 4.5. As mentioned, qualitative studies require rich descriptions of research contexts, enabling readers to determine if research findings may provide understandings in different contexts (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). I provide the context in which the study was carried out next and include explanations of relevant terms applicable to the categories of law enforcers in this study.

4.3 RESEARCH CONTEXT

In this section, I present contextual descriptions to enrich the reader's understanding of women in law enforcement. Such a contextualisation of the study may also help the reader understand how this context relates to women's experiences of stress and challenges to their well-being.

Law enforcement categories of police officers and traffic officers constituted the context of this study – specifically, law enforcement departments in the Western Cape, South Africa. Officers' work situation typically comprises an internal and external work environment. In the internal work environment at the particular traffic services or police station, they carry out administrative duties. The external work environment is where the law enforcement takes place, with members usually wearing uniforms while performing their duties. Traffic officers who are qualified as an *examiner for driving licences* or *examiner of vehicles* may be assigned those duties from time to time. Due to this aspect, they may spend more time at the office, where they may be allowed to wear civilian clothes. As a rule, however, traffic officers will spend most of their working day on the road. Only senior traffic officers in ranks above shift supervisor may be more office-bound. The amount of time traffic- and police officers spent inside or outside therefore depends on their rank or assigned duties.

Officers' rank structure ties into their command structure (described later in this section), lending a generally formal atmosphere to how things are done within the particular uniformed law enforcement environment. Authority is related to rank, creating a culture in which it may be challenging to have influence or to voice

opinions if a person does not occupy a higher rank. The nature of the job is one in which rules and regulations must be followed. Most situations grant no room for flexibility. In Chapter One I discussed the conflictual nature of the work environment and the impact this has on individuals. In general, an organisational culture contributes to shared feelings and perceptions about the way things are done in the workplace (Martins & Martins, 2001). Related experiences were expected to come up later in the data analysis, for Chen (2015) found that women's stress levels are higher than that of men's, given factors such as psychological differences between the sexes as well as the workplace culture in policing.

Regarding the operational side of the work, my experience was that the type of work that male and female officers do in traffic law enforcement does not differ at all. In the police services, it is clear that significant progress has been made by assigning duties that males used to undertake to females, who used to perform mostly administrative functions (Newham et al., 2006). The contextual role descriptions of law enforcers below, elucidate the professional background against which the constructs of authenticity, coping and well-being were explored. To shed more light on the research environment and put the participants' experiences into context, one should therefore understand the terms police officer, traffic officer and peace officer, since they held these respective positions. I also introduce the participants to the reader and discuss similar studies that link the contribution(s) of this study to the body of existing knowledge.

4.3.1 Police officer

The *Criminal Procedure Act* (1977) describes that a police officer is a member of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Accordingly:

> "*Police official* means any member of the Force as defined in Section 1 of the Police Act, 1958 (Act 7 of 1958), and *police* has a corresponding meaning."

Section 205(3) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (108 of 1996) states that SAPS members should adhere to the objectives imposed on them and must prevent, investigate and fight crime. They must uphold public order, ensuring

that citizens and their property are secured and protected. Police must also uphold the law and enforce it. Material sources of the South African law bestow powers and duties on members of SAPS. These are common law (unwritten South African law), statutory law and case law or court decisions (SAPS, 2006). Different ranks exist within the position levels of Non-Commissioned Officers (lowest category), Commissioned Officers (mid-level officer rank) and Senior Management, who are also Commissioned officers and the highest group of police ranks (https://www.saps.gov.za). After their appointment, officers can move up in the ranking structure by acquiring more experience and by pursuing further training, studies and qualifications in their field of specialisation.

4.3.2 Traffic officer

Traffic officers can be appointed by Provincial and Local Authorities, who derive legal powers to do so from the *National Road Traffic Act* (93 of 1996). Accordingly:

> "*Traffic officer* means a traffic officer appointed under Section 3A and any member of the Service, and any member of a municipal police service, both as defined in section 1 of the South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995), and for the purposes of Chapters V, IX, XI and sections 74 and 78 of this Act includes a peace officer."

Traffic officers need to be appointed also as peace officers according to the *Criminal Procedure Act* (1977), section 334(1)(a). Only then may they execute their duties, some of which derive from the mentioned Act. Further, the *National Road Traffic Act* (1996) permits traffic officers, amongst other duties, the power to temporarily prohibit a motorist from operating the vehicle if that individual appears incapable. Officers can inspect vehicles, compel an individual to give any information required for identification, as well as regulate and control the traffic on public roads. Their duties comprise the powers awarded to a peace officer and to a police officer, but are bound by provisions as specified while excluding sections so stated. Administrative tasks take place primarily in the office. Law enforcement is done on public roads of the particular municipal or provincial region (*National Road Traffic Act,* 1996).

Various levels of employment exist in Traffic Services, pertaining to traffic officers. Generally, from the lowest to highest ranking, these levels comprise trainee, functional, supervisory/functional, supervisory, middle management and senior management (Road Traffic Management Corporation, 2014). Various designations of posts may exist within each level, with regard to Municipal and Provincial Traffic Services. The Traffic Services environment has several opportunities for specialised training, such as *examiner for driving licences* (testing applicants for driver fitness) and *examiner of vehicles* (examining vehicles for roadworthiness). Both courses are separate from and additional to the basic traffic officer's training (at this stage). In this study I included traffic officers who also qualified and served as testing officers. Hence, they may be required to perform such duties from time to time. Depending on the training institution, Municipal Police (or City Police) training may be obtained concurrently with traffic officer training. Some traffic officers may also wish to obtain a tertiary qualification in this field. Given that traffic officers and police officers are linked through being appointed as peace officers under the applicable Act, the description of this terminology follows next.

4.3.3 Peace officer

To be able to execute their duties, individuals must be appointed as peace officers. The Minister of Justice can declare certain persons to be peace officers by means of the *Criminal Procedure Act* (1977), section 334(1)(a). It specifies the categories of peace officers, areas and purposes pertaining to the exercise of defined powers relating to specified offences. The definition provided in the *Criminal Procedure Act* (51 of 1977) states that:

> "*Peace officer* includes any magistrate, justice, police official, correctional official as defined in Section 1 of the Correctional Services Act, 1959, and, in relation to any area, offence, class of offence or power referred to in a notice issued under Section 334(1), any person who is a peace officer under that section."

4.3.4 Introducing the participants

The following are brief narrative paragraphs on each participant. These were compiled from their interview data, which together with the inclusion criteria and sample characteristics (under 4.5.2) serve to contextualise their voices:

PO1 (age: between 46-55 years; service: between 25-30 years) became a police officer after seeing a photograph of a female police officer. She recalled the desire of another adult for her to also become one. When she applied for admission to training, she was employed in another unrelated job. Upon acceptance for training, she left her previous occupation. She started out at one police station and after receiving a promotion, was transferred to another. She is married with children, while at the time of this study she had no additional tertiary education. PO1 is not too interested in promotions in the future. She opines this may be so because she has a husband who also earns an income to contribute toward their family. However, she also experiences her personality as “too soft” to work with “hardened police men”. Nevertheless, she has a passion for helping people, making a difference in the lives of others and wants to carry on doing so into the future.

PO2 (age: between 46-55 years; service: between 25-30 years) is single and has children. Being a police officer was not really her first choice. She did pursue her first choice for a while, until financial constraints resulted in her giving that up and going into police law enforcement. According to her, police work was also an easy occupation to choose given the in-service training, while also affording many benefits. At the same time, she also felt that she may have joined the force because there were police officers in her family at that stage. She shared that her journey was perhaps not as difficult as that of others. Still, for her she had to get to know herself, her personality and who she is. After this, she feels, things just fell into place. At the time of this research she had no additional tertiary education. She sees herself doing more courses and reaching a certain level within the police ranks, after which she is considering leaving the force, perhaps to start a business.

PO3 (age: between 46-55 years; service: between 11-15 years) described that she

never saw herself as a police officer. She started out studying toward another occupation, but it was her father's desire that she should become a police officer. She eventually conceded and joined the force to get financial security. Her job experiences were difficult because she was the only woman in a group of men. Nonetheless, she enjoyed her work. The challenges related to her work environment caused her to empower herself by learning new skills, improving existing ones, getting to know herself, thinking about where she sees herself in the future and how to get there. Hence, she completed a tertiary qualification while working, but conveyed that this was not easy. Along her journey, she applied for higher positions that brought about their own challenges once attained. She chose to remain focussed and motivated to overcome her challenges by thinking of her child and by hanging on to her faith. PO3 was single at the time of this study. Her aspirations included further studies and working toward a position with better remuneration.

PO4 (age: between 46-55 years; service: between 25-30 years) applied to the police force after being impressed by two uniformed female police officers. She was also already a mother when she attended the police college. Upon completion of her basic training she learnt various aspects of her profession very quickly, so much so that she enjoyed a promotion over colleagues with more service years than herself. She recalls that police men were killed. This made her very scared, worried and unable to cope with the work environment, so that she suffered physical ailments as a result. Afterward, she was fortunate to secure police work at stations in safer environments. Also, her work was of exceptional quality, which led to further promotions in her case. The downside was that her promotions and empowerment through workshops and/or courses resulted in jealousy from some colleagues. Nonetheless, she is passionate about her work and uses her spiritual beliefs to cope better with work challenges. She also started tertiary education along her journey, but had to stop due to family and work responsibilities. She is married and sees herself owning a business one day after she leaves the force.

PO5 (age: between 46-55 years; service: between 31-35 years) joined the force because it was financially less burdensome in comparison to some other studies. Her brother was also in the force and the uniform inspired her to join the force. In

the force she was transferred a few times. At first this was shocking to her, but later she decided to embrace such experiences as challenges from which to learn. Nonetheless, some days personal and work challenges became overwhelming, which affected her health negatively at some stage. She has children, but still managed to complete her tertiary studies while working in the police service. At this stage she feels happy in her career. She was single at the time of this study and sees herself maybe advancing to another rank at work, should a position become available for which she can apply.

PO6 (age: between 36-45 years; service: between 5-10 years) is single with no children. She started out in another career, but felt that her previous work environment did not allow her to give expression to the things she loved doing. When the opportunity came, she applied to the police force because she had a desire to be a police officer and given the many opportunities within the field. She also continued with tertiary studies due to her interest in social issues. Her studies motivated her to take on the challenges in her work environment with a positive attitude. She also copes with stressors by means of self-confidence, as well as a spiritual identity that she freely expresses. For the future, she wants to continue her studies and contribute to the welfare of the broader community.

TO1 (age: between 26-35 years; service: between 5-10 years) never thought that she wanted to become a traffic officer. A family member saw an advert and informed her of the vacancies. She decided to apply although she was already in another job. As a traffic law enforcement officer, she found her interactions with the public particularly challenging, while some accident scenes were more difficult to cope with than others on a psychological level. Such aspects, together with challenges in her personal life, contributed to tremendous stress. She wished that she could have empowered herself more at work through further education, had she known about related opportunities. However, her career priorities have changed in part because she had children. At the time of this study she was single. She felt that being a traffic officer is no longer for her, but she also did not know where to next.

TO2 (age: between 26-35 years; service: between 5-10 years) became a traffic officer, but with the intention of specialising as an examiner later on. To fulfil this intention, over time she acquired everything that one would need in order to become an examiner as well. Hence, she now has opportunities to perform duties as both a traffic officer and an examiner in her workplace. She acknowledges that being a woman in uniform is not easy in general. It requires persistence and a strong character, because she feels that women are being suppressed a lot in this occupation. However, she opines that she has the internal resources to cope well with her challenges. She stays motivated also by thinking of her family because she is married. Her aspirations include further development and studies so that she can continue to grow within her field.

TO3 (age: between 36-45 years; service: between 11-15 years) developed a liking for the profession of a traffic officer, because she thought it came with authority and it made her feel important. Later, she realised that there is more to the profession and it is hard work, especially given the working hours, the shifts, and being on your feet for long at times. All these factors she could cope with, until she became a mother with related responsibilities. It then felt as if she was on duty for twenty-four hours. Later, not even the good salary could compensate for the time away from her family and the unhappiness caused by her work situation. As time went by, her heart was not in the job anymore. However, this also led to self-discovery and personal growth for her. Eventually, she secured another job in the law enforcement field that suits her personal situation better and in which she finds more fulfilment.

TO4 (age: between 36-45 years; service: between 16-20 years) applied for the position of traffic officer because it entailed in-service training. She enjoyed swift promotions. She is married and had children along the way. At work she has to deal with a lot of different emotions and people. Therefore, she tries to separate work and her private life as best she can by not taking her work home, while giving her family the necessary attention when at home. She frequently resorts to her spiritual resources as a way of coping with work-related challenges. Concerning the future, further promotions are not priority as this would probably mean leaving her family

behind in her situation. Therefore, she sees herself probably retiring in her current position.

TO5 (age: between 36-45 years; service: between 11-15 years) is single and without children. She entered traffic law enforcement after she struggled to get into police services. Since she grew up in a uniformed environment, she always wanted to get into such a position as well. Hence, when she became a traffic officer she was very happy. She enjoys her work, but soon realised how difficult it was to advance. She then applied to another station in the hope that promotion would be easier. Her view is that her career is standing still at the moment and that she does not see a future for her within Traffic Services. She finds more fulfilment though when she performs examiner duties, but only performs these from time to time. However, she feels that she must persist and does so through things such as being grateful for having a job.

TO6 (age: between 26-35 years; service: between 5-10 years) is also single and without children. Initially, she wanted to be a police officer. She was also inspired upon seeing a female traffic officer and worked toward becoming one herself. Once appointed, she found the job positively challenging, interesting and constantly wanting to improve her knowledge. Hence, she pursued tertiary education that she completed while in service. She enjoys doing extra tasks at work. Her efforts to develop herself in this manner caused her to experience a lot of jealousy from some colleagues. However, she chooses to keep on growing, to learn from her challenges and to be successful in her career.

Next, I discuss how the current study adds to the body of existing knowledge within the contexts of the research topic, by considering a few related studies.

4.3.5 Similar studies

As introduced in Chapter One, past research carried out with women in traditionally male-dominated work environments focussed on coping, well-being and related challenges. These studies included women in higher education (Löve et al., 2011), engineering (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2015) and mining (Botha & Cronje, 2015).

Some studies combined different occupations, such as Martin and Barnard (2013) as well as Mostert (2009). Chen (2015) studied the stress of women in police services. South African research on occupational stress has been conducted about coping in police officers (cf. Madu & Poodhun, 2006; Pienaar, Rothmann & Van De Vijver, 2007; Rothmann, 2008) and how they use religion and spiritual resources in coping strategies (Joubert & Grobler, 2013; Pienaar & Rothmann, 2003).

Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) studied authenticity in managers in the public service, linking authenticity to coping and well-being. Regarding traffic law enforcement, traffic officers are faced with stress related issues (Pienaar, 2007; Van Heerden, 1990). To cope at work in the South African context traffic officers may resort to spirituality (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017) – which has been linked to authenticity (Barton, 2009) – but the particular study was not specific to women. Hence, there is a need for continued research on women's well-being in a male-dominated and/or law enforcement context. Also, none of the research explored how women develop authenticity and how they use authenticity to cope and enhance their well-being in their work environments. This study adds to the body of existing knowledge on authenticity by exploring women's authenticity as a means of coping in the law enforcement context, to enhance their well-being.

4.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The research procedure involved multiple narrative interviews with 12 women in law enforcement. In the officer's context, the study site refers to the place selected where interviews could be carried out in person (Schensul, 2008), to obtain the required data. The research was conducted on women from law enforcement environments, which have been identified as previously male-dominated (Newham et al., 2006; SAPS annual report 2014/2015; WCG, 2012). These comprised the South African Police Service and Traffic Services. Unique and unpredictable characteristics are inherent to their work environments. Hence, the study site was selected as convenient to participants and at a time and venue that could minimise unforeseen interruptions. Some of the interviews were scheduled during working

hours at their offices during breaks, some at their homes and others at the researcher's office.

I conducted the interviews according to the interview schedule (see Annexure C), at a time and place as described above. I interpreted the data through hermeneutic phenomenological analysis (Kafle, 2011; Laverty, 2003) and added my personal, intuitive revelations or breakthroughs as data for interpretation, given the transpersonal nature of the inquiry (Anderson, 2004). Ethical clearance was obtained to conduct the study (see Annexure A). Participants gave informed consent to be interviewed and to record the interviews (see section 4.10). The written consent form explained to women the rights they have as participants in the research (see Annexure B). Ethical considerations explained to them included their right to anonymity and confidentiality, that participation had to be voluntary, while withdrawal from the research could take place at any stage. Further discussions on what I did during the different stages in the study are provided as part of the research methods that are explained next.

4.5 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods entail the strategies utilised in the data collection, analysis and interpretations (Creswell, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I employed qualitative research methods to interpret and portray the emotions and experiences of participants (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). As alluded to, my personal transformation was also considered as data (Anderson, 2015). The type of methods selected for collecting, analysing and interpreting data are congruent with the overarching methodology underlying hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches. Methods discussed in this section pertain to aspects of the population and sampling, to data collection, data management and security as well as data analysis (Schensul, 2008).

4.5.1 Population

The population denotes the total group of cases that comply with certain conditions to which the findings of this research are intended to be generalised (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2010). The research population comprises all women in law enforcement from the Western Cape and the occupations described in the research context above. In the case of qualitative research mentioned earlier, the researcher aims for transferability of findings (see section 4.9.2) instead of generalisability (Kelly, 2006a). The sampling frame is therefore rather of relevance, which denotes the pool of elements from which the sample was chosen and as informed by delimiting aspects (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Therefore, women in law enforcement in the Western Cape were subject to sampling selection or inclusion criteria, as described next.

4.5.2 Sampling

In this section the sampling methods and potential bias are discussed, followed by the applied inclusion criteria. The section concludes with a description of the sample characteristics.

4.5.2.1 Sampling methods and potential bias

Sampling involves all the choices made regarding which individuals, experiences, settings, actions and social processes to study (Durrheim, 2006). I chose purposive sampling given the exploratory nature of the research (Saumure & Given, 2008). I employed my knowledge of the population to make a judgement on which participants to choose, according to their ability to render the best information to satisfy the study objectives (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I relied on specific inclusion criteria (specified in the following section 4.5.2.2) in the identification of possible participants, to gauge the possibility of them having gained adequate experience in relation to the research phenomenon. Hence, participants were chosen purposely for their information-rich experiences and subject to these inclusion criteria (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). I experienced that law enforcement officers form a tight community and will not easily take any so-called outsider into their confidence. Higher ranking officers may even be less willing to be interviewed, with the result that it was very difficult to secure sessions with them. Purposive sampling was extremely useful as participation was subject to willingness and availability to participate, and to find experiences typical to the particular population

(Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Participants were accessed through mutual friends, ex-colleagues and approached via telephone or e-mail to determine the willingness to participate.

Saumure and Given (2008) describe how purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, renders some shortcomings. It may limit the researcher's ability to ensure transferability of findings, or to ensure the application of the interpretations to other groups. Researcher bias may also be a factor when choosing participants through these techniques. Sampling bias denotes any factor that may influence the randomness with which a sample population is chosen (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). However, qualitative research is typically associated with non-random sampling, as the purpose is to obtain cases that are information-rich (Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Given the nature of qualitative research and my paradigmatic assumptions explicated previously, the possibility of bias requires attention. Researcher bias was dealt with in this study by acknowledging issues of subjectivity and by being transparent, honest and clear in describing the researcher, conceptual frameworks and research contexts throughout (Miller, 2008).

The occupations and background of participants had the potential to lead to sampling bias. Given the nature of the law enforcement environment, it is not always easy to be allowed into the lives of these women. This aspect may increase the tendency to want to select the first available person (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010), irrespective of suitability to advance knowledge on the research topic. However, my familiarity with the research context (not necessarily with participants) allowed me to get entry into their occupational fields and to gain the trust of participants. This factor reduced sampling bias, as I did not have to resort to merely selecting participants with whom I had crossed paths before, or who seemed easier or more convenient to approach. Conversely, the fact that I was familiar with the research context may also be construed as adding to bias. However, "familiarity" in my case is more accurately "knowing of", because that is what it is like in the law enforcement fraternity. For me it is not about having socialised with some participants – we may know about each other. I left the law enforcement environment just over five years ago, and many of my ex-colleagues still regard me as their colleague. Participants

in the research who have not met me before, were more willing to take part when they learned that I also served in the law enforcement environment.

Sampling bias also had less of an impact on the project due to the choice of research approaches. Integration of the transpersonal approach allowed for the study of complicated topics founded in my personal experience. As an important assumption, my own data were included in the research process (Anderson, 2015). The assumptions of social constructionism and hermeneutic phenomenology also emphasise that they do not claim generalisability, but one perspective of a phenomenon, while other perspectives may also be possible. This methodological framework explicitly regards interpretation through preconceived conceptual frameworks as contributing to the rigour of the research. Furthermore, my gender, law enforcement background and current profession seemed to spark a willingness in women to participate in the research in the context of its purpose and "bigger picture". Finally, the inclusion criteria in itself contributed to reducing sampling bias.

4.5.2.2 Inclusion criteria

The inclusion criteria of this sample comprised gender, occupational field, position and number of years in service. Table 4.1 depicts the four inclusion criteria. The number of women in the sample adhering to these are discussed thereafter. The sample size (N=12) and sample characteristics are discussed in the next section.

Table 4.1: Inclusion criteria (N=12)

			Number of women according to position and occupational field	
Female L/E Officers	**Number of years in service and number of women in each**		**Position**	
			Occupational field: Police	**Occupational field: Traffic**
✓	5-10 years	4	Non-commissioned 1	Functional 3
✓	11-15 years	3	Mid-level 1	Functional 2
✓	16-20 years	1	0	Supervisory/functional 1
✓	25-30 years	3	Mid-level 2; Senior management 1	0
✓	31-35 years	1	Mid-level 1	0

Since gender was an inclusion criterion, participants had to be females. I sampled only women because this study aimed to address the following research question: "How do women in a traditionally male-dominated work context such as law-enforcement, develop authenticity in maintaining their well-being?" Consequently, the implications of this choice are addressed later in this thesis under sections 7.5 and 7.6.3 of Chapter Seven. Women had to be from the occupational field of law enforcement (L/E) to participate in the research, particularly from categories of police- and traffic officers. Participants had to occupy a senior position. The reasoning is that women who occupy more senior positions in a male-dominated work environment, may find it more challenging to develop authenticity. This can be inferred as different coping strategies were found to exist in different ranks (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2003), while the theoretical links between authenticity, coping ability and resultant well-being have been established (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014). Hence, their experiences could likely provide very valuable information regarding the research topic. The six police women who participated comprised one non-commissioned officer, four mid-level commissioned officers and one senior management commissioned officer. The six traffic officers comprised five on functional levels of employment and one on a supervisory/functional level.

Further to occupying a senior position, female officers were included if they have been in the service for at least five years (tenure). The reasoning for this inclusion criterion is that long service years speak to richer data being available on the women's experiences of authenticity in this law enforcement context, incorporating evidence of developing authenticity over time. Martin and Barnard (2013) spoke of the exceptional challenges encountered by women in male-dominated professions that require unique coping strategies to persevere. The inclusion criteria thus contributed to the purpose of unearthing information-rich experiences of the research phenomenon. With regard to the number of years in service, four women have been working there for five to 10 years, three for 11 to 15 years, one for 16 to 20 years, three for 25 to 30 years and one for 31 to 35 years.

4.5.2.3 Sample size and characteristics

The sample comprised 12 participants. Smaller sample sizes are adequate to draw confident conclusions if chosen purposefully and the sample is relatively homogeneous (Maxwell, 2008). Homogeneity means that the participants are not much different regarding dimensions and behaviour that can influence concepts of theoretical interest to the study (Calder, Phillips & Tybout, 1981) and therefore refer to the inclusion criteria above. Further, homogeneous samples allow for more accurate theoretical predictions than samples with greater variance in behaviour (Calder et al., 1981). I included “peace officer” in the research context because police- and traffic officers are also peace officers and to show shared characteristics between the two law enforcement categories. The research is primarily exploratory and fewer participants are usually required to produce dense concepts (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). A smaller sample size is also justifiable in the context of the qualitative research approaches forming part of my methodological framework. These enabled me to work between reading literature and interviews. I could return to literature when necessary to broaden my preunderstanding (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004) and enhance my understanding of the research topic (Anderson, 2015). Hence, multiple interviews were conducted with each participant (Riessman, 2008), also to verify ideas held by the participants or the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The experience of interest entailed how they develop authenticity in a work environment that is male-dominated. From the definition of authenticity adopted in this study, I infer that women’s authenticity experiences may unfold in both their work and private lives. Hence, the aim was to understand lived experiences against the individual’s background (Laverty, 2003). Therefore, additional contextual aspects were considered in the data interpretation as presented by the sample characteristics (table 4.2), namely age, race, education, marital status and number of children. Three women were between 26 to 35 years of age, five between 36 to 45 years and four between 46 to 55 years. In total the sample comprised three Black, seven Mixed Race and two White participants. Some of the participants have additional qualifications: five have tertiary university qualifications (diploma or

degree); one is also qualified as a municipal police officer (MPO), while two are qualified as examiners for driving licenses and/or of motor vehicles; four had no additional qualifications at the time of this study. Four of the women are married: three with children and one without children. Eight participants are single: five with children and three without children.

Table 4.2: Sample characteristics (N=12)

	Number of Police Officers	**Number of Traffic Officers**	**Additional Education**			**Married & Children**		**Single & Children**	
			Tertiary: degree/ diploma	Other: Examiner / MPO	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Age Groups									
26-35	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
36-45	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	2
46-55	4	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	0
Subtotals	-	-	-	-	-	*3*	*1*	*5*	*3*
	6	*6*	*5*	*3*	*4*	*4*		*8*	
Total	***12***		***12***			***12***			
Race Groups									
Black	2	1							
Mixed Race	3	4							
White	1	1							
Subtotal	*6*	*6*							
Total	***12***								

4.5.3 Data collection

Data collection in qualitative research – as with analysis – involves strategies rather than a procedure, meaning that techniques are dependent on each foregoing strategy and on the emerging data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The data collection strategy involved multiple narrative interviews as I returned to the same informants (Riessman, 2008) for probing, verification, and to illuminate understanding. The collection of data occurred in phases as described by Kelly (2006b, pp. 297- 302), and were applied here as follows:

- **I planned for the interview.** I evaluated the problem statement and preliminary research questions, and used this information to determine the particular setting, and the type of interviewees that would be satisfactorily knowledgeable on the research topic. The type of information required was used to determine the type of interview or its degree of structure, and to plan the interview questions that I used to guide the interview.
- **Setting up the interview** involved ensuring that the interviewee allocated adequate time for the interview, and was able to be fully attentive for its duration. The space had to be sufficiently private, free of unnecessary disturbances, and free from noises that may negatively affect the recordings.
- **Aspects of recording** included obtaining consent for making the recordings and to have the participant understand the importance of recording the interviews. I ensured that the recording device worked and that I was comfortable with its usage. The recorder was fully charged and had enough space to record interviews.
- **Starting the interview**, I established rapport and created a trusting relationship by giving a short description of the purpose of the study. I put participants at ease by posing open-ended non-threatening questions to help them convey experiences freely. I posed more sensitive questions only later. The interviewee was informed also of the expected duration of each interview.
- **The actual interview** itself is discussed separately and in detail after this.
- **Ending the interview** involved managing the length of the interview and restricting each session to a maximum of an hour and a half – for the sake of maintaining the concentration of the interviewee. I asked participants if they wanted to add anything else. Attention was given to what the participant added after the recording was turned off. Arrangements were made for the next session, because multiple sessions were planned for data collection. As soon as I could, following the session, I made process notes of things such as what I felt during the interview, valuable information shared after the recording was ended, ideas that came to mind during the interview, and any questions I intended to ask but did not get the time to. I kept recordings secure as explained in section 4.6 below.

- **Transcribing the interview** comprised verbatim transcriptions of the data from the recordings and were done primarily by myself. This ensured that data could later be interpreted within the context of its surrounding sentences and conversation. Notes were made of valuable ideas that came to mind while making the transcriptions. Reading text back while playing the recording added to data reliability, and strengthened my image of the interview in its totality. This also allowed for the addition of non-linguistic communications such as sighs, laughter, or even silence, which I may have missed and that adds to the process notes. I had assistance with only one transcription (by one transcriber), for I also did one and was comfortable to do the rest. This limited data not under my sole control, and maximised opportunities for getting to know the material. See section 4.6 for a detailed explanation of how transcriber assistance was ethically employed.

As evident, I was the main instrument in data collection and analysis. Therefore, the importance of the researcher as primary instrument is discussed.

4.5.4 Researcher as primary instrument

Within the qualitative tradition, I was responsible for conducting the research, which required well developed skills in listening, observing, questioning and interpreting (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). Accordingly, interpretive inquirers must also be able to adequately describe and explain their own influence in the research. Therefore, according to Johnson-Bailey and Ray (2008, pp. 226-227), the following is of relevance in terms of social constructs, validation of women's lives and the participant-researcher relationship:

- Given that only I designed the study and chose the methods and tools to make meaning of phenomena, attention had to be paid to how such issues as gender, class and race may influence the research process. These are social constructs that may, nevertheless, influence lived experiences. I reported these issues in the sample description while they also influenced my interpretation of data.

- I attempted to deal with the intrinsic ranked power inequalities typical to the research relationship (researcher-participant). I did so by striving to depart from male-dominated exploratory paradigms and by creating room for the researcher-participant relationship. For example, by choosing a qualitative research design and associated methods I could honour the subjective nature of the women's authenticity experiences and create a more empathic relationship between participants and myself.
- I further attempted to balance the power in the researcher-participant relationship through considering my stance as insider or outsider in relation to women in this study. Concerning the insider/outsider relationship, shared bonds represented by gender, class and/or race serve as foundations on which to build trust, empathy and dialogue.

I identify with most participant characteristics and now elaborate on how I considered all three aspects above. Technically, having left the law enforcement environment, I am an outsider. This stance involves the sceptical side or "third-person" perspective, which places more distance between myself and the experiences under exploration. However, qualitative material is viewed on an interpretive continuum from empathic to sceptical, with the empathic side representing the "insider" or "first person" perspective (Kelly, 2006a). On reflection – although not appointed as a law enforcer anymore – I still consider myself an insider. The connection that a law enforcer has with the field and other officers does not disappear just because you leave the occupation. People you leave behind do not treat you any differently than when you were an officer. However, status as an insider do not always count in favour of the researcher, in such cases where women perhaps prefer to talk to an outsider due to concerns about confidentiality (Temple, 2008). Thus, was I an insider or an outsider? My status in this regard relates to the way I was perceived by the participants. Hence, I dealt with possible consequences that my position could have on my relationship with the participants by managing their perceptions of me as insider or outsider. I found it helpful to incorporate skills prescribed by the transpersonal guidelines (see section 4.7.3), as well as my experience as a psychologist, to deal with these perceptions to create a trusting relationship. More specifically, in this study the particular insider/outsider position is

also influenced by the fact that I did the research in my gender, together with such diversity aspects as race, class and ethnicity (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008). Accordingly, I also had to reflect on these aspects, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of various positions. The majority of qualitative researchers commence by gathering data from the insider's (emic) perspective, while understanding such data using both this perspective and scientific analysis (etic view) (Fetterman, 2008).

Factors that may have influenced my perspectives include supposed understanding, bias, and supposed subjectivity (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008). Moving between the insider and outsider positions helped me to consider both *subjective* and *objective* realities that transpired (Fetterman, 2008). To reconcile the disparities of position and power inherent to the researcher-participant relationship, I had to share power, value participants' experiences (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008), be humble, respect and care for them (Anderson, 2015). In qualitative studies the researcher has empathetic and ethical obligations (Wassenaar, 2009). Accordingly, one must consider if women will notice how they have been described, how data are conveyed and interpreted, keeping their stories or voices as the focal point of the research, or subjecting stories to researcher analysis (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008). Since this research involves my personal transformation, to have compassion or consideration for participant concerns (like these mentioned) is necessary for my own transpersonal development (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). The research approaches allowed me – but also required of me – to balance the voices of participants with my voice of analysis (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008). Therefore, I fulfilled these obligations by returning to participants with the processed data, so that they could verify and feel comfortable with contributions selected. Where substantiating quotations contained box brackets that provide context, these were verified as well. In line with the research approaches, the data were obtained from interviews, feelings and observations.

4.5.5 Interviews

The primary method in which data gathering was done for the qualitative research was through conducting interviews. This method complements the interpretive

nature of the research, providing an opportunity to get to know people and to understand what they feel and think. At the same time meaning is co-constructed, resulting from the relationship between the researcher and participant (Kelly, 2006b). I constructed the interviews mainly according to characteristics of the narrative interview, with specific questions that I pre-planned as part of my preparation for the interviews. The main interviews were between 40 minutes to an hour long (two interviews exceeded one hour), while the follow-up interviews lasted about half an hour.

4.5.5.1 Narrative interviews

Narrative interviews were used to elicit lived stories on how women develop authenticity within a male-dominated work setting. The type of interview relates to the methodology adopted in this study in various ways and complements the underlying assumptions of the hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal perspectives adopted in this study. The interview content and structure were informed by theory relevant to the research analysis as well as the research question (Ayres, 2008). Narrative interviews are ways in which to understand the experiences of people and a method for accessing and studying phenomena in context of past and current events, careers, other relevant themes and across time (Schensul, 2008). Hence, interviews were organised in a temporal way and primarily aimed at revealing the thinking that underpins the relationship of experiences in participant stories (Ayres, 2008).

4.5.5.2 Interview questions

Narrative interviews demand skilful design and questions must be compiled carefully so that these can create a purposeful and flowing interview (Ayres, 2008). The literature summary contributed to the structuring of the interview's questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Below are examples of how I used the elements from the definition of authenticity – adopted in this research – and related these to corresponding elements from the constructs of coping and well-being (table 4.3), to inform my planning of the questions for the interview. The literature sources are indicated as numbers and corresponding citations are provided afterward.

Table 4.3: Using theory to inform the interview questions

Authenticity	Coping	Well-being
Ongoing (1)	Authenticity stems from an ongoing process of adaptation (1)	Processes: cognitive, physical, affective, spiritual, self and social (15)
Alignment (2)	Becoming more congruent through change; flexible in responses and interactions (8)	Direct, alter, adapt toward health (13); align actions (with true self) (16)
Emotions (2)	Emotional process (9); stress as subset of emotion (10); alter emotions (11)	Positive emotions about past, present and future (11)
Thoughts (2)	Alter thoughts (11); Coping thoughts (5); cognitive flexibility (4)	Temporal thoughts about experiences (11)
Behaviour (2)	Behavioural adaptability (4); flexible behavioural responses (4)	Direct relationships (13); actions aligned/EWB (16)
Best-self (3)	Authenticity key to understanding adaptive characteristics of optimal self-esteem (2)	Spiritual joy – eudaimonia (16); truth viewed as that which does not harm (5)
Mindfulness (4)(12)(13)	Direct the mind (13); adapting to stressors linked to ability to organise emotions (14)	Healthy mind (11); Influenced positively by mindfulness (17)
Responsible choice (4)(6)(7)	Direct flow intentionally (13); free to move toward self-discovery and adjustment (14)	Choice to pursue best potential and use these to fulfil goals (EWB) (18); positive consequence (18)(19)
Sources: (1) Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; (2) Kernis & Goldman, 2006; (3) Human, Biesanz, Parisotto & Dunn, 2012; (4) Carson & Langer, 2006; (5) Zukav, 2014; (6) Johnson, 2008; (7) Theron, 2009; (8) Savickas, 1997; (9) Ryan, Rapley & Dziurawiec, 2014; (10) Lazarus, 1993; (11) Seligman, 2004; (12) Lyubovnikova et al., 2017; (13) Siegel, 2012; (14) Grof et al., 2008; (15) Roothman et al., 2003; (16) Norton, 1976; (17) Baer et al., 2008; (18) Waterman et al., 2010; (19) Danna & Griffin, 1999.		

The research objectives were kept in mind, as well as the metatheoretical context and the methodology that guide this study, so that the resultant interview questions were formulated for the main interview as follows (table 4.4):

Table 4.4: Interview questions for main interview

	Main questions	Possible probing questions
1	How did you become a … how was it when you started, how did your career unfold and what lies ahead…?	What thoughts and emotions do you experience in this environment?
2	Share with me times you find/found it easier to be your best-self at work and about times you find/found it more difficult?	How do thoughts and emotions influence your dealing with challenges?
		So where do/did you find the strength?

The narrative nature of the opening question elicited a temporal perspective to participants' career life stories. Understanding was gained by listening to people's stories encompassing their past, present and the future (Thrift & Amundson, 2007). Given the research question as well as the purpose of analysis (Ayres, 2008) the narrative interviews had very clear objectives and were aimed to gather insider's views as well (Fetterman, 2008). Such interviews allow and encourage participants to tell their lived experiences on the topic freely (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004), whilst having a clear direction in relation to the research objective. Probing questions were asked when prompted by participants. For example, when the participants mentioned the male-dominated nature of their work environment and/or associated challenges, I could ask how it made them feel and think so as to elicit their coping responses.

Hence, probing questions were asked only when and where required, and then to encourage further story-telling and reflection (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). Probing for further information typically rendered even more detail of experiences relating to emotions and feelings involved in developing authenticity. Valuable contributions flowed from concluding the interview by asking if participants wanted to add anything else. As part of ending the interview, as in the interview schedule (see Annexure C), participants were reminded to expect a follow-up interview that would be arranged for the purpose of verifying their ideas and issues requiring more clarity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I conducted these after I had the transcriptions and commenced with analysis. However, no new questions were asked, as the purpose

was to authenticate their contributions further. For example, there were instances where, after I considered certain words within context, I realised that the word was not reflective of what the participant meant. During the follow-up interview I could then clarify the intended meaning with the participant.

4.5.6 Emotions and observations

Emotions involve complex intrinsic mental processes as well as discrete feelings (LaMothe, 2010). It contributes significantly to our understanding of how we interact with each other, so that participants' emotions were included as data (Copp, 2008). My own emotions were also included, corresponding with the transpersonal approach adopted in this research. To keep record of participants' emotions and of my own, I kept a journal of my personal reflection, my emotions and thoughts about data, the research process, patterns and observations during interviews as suggested by Brodsky (2008). I also made field notes during and directly after interviews. Some of the notes I integrated in my journal afterward. Reflections from my journal and the field notes were later integrated into the thesis. The journal and field notes enhanced transparency, contributing to the rigour and quality of the research. Some of my reflections were also done electronically and directly into the thesis – incorporating ideas immediately as they arose.

4.5.6.1 Emotions of participants

During the interviews the women either named their emotions directly, while in other instances I could derive what emotion she felt in the situation she was telling me about. I also paid attention to the emotions or moods in which the participants relayed their stories. I made notes during the interviews, or shortly afterward if I thought that something could influence my interpretation of the interview. The emotions were therefore captured on the actual recordings, as part of my field notes and when transcriptions were made. These emotions were documented and incorporated during the data analysis and interpretations. This aspect was significant since emotions were identified as a common factor throughout the primary constructs in this study (i.e., authenticity, coping and well-being). As established, inauthenticity was associated with negative emotions (Ariza-Montes et

al., 2017; Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014), while being authentic was found to require emotional intelligence (McGrath, 2013). With reference to coping, emotions provide more valuable information on how people perform in situations of adaptation and general life, than when considering stress as a single dimension (Lazarus, 1993). Feelings and emotions were found to be very important in well-being as well (Diener et al., 2008; Huang, 2008; Roothman et al., 2003; Strümpfer, 2006; Waterman et al., 2010).

4.5.6.2 Emotions of the researcher

I also included my own feelings about the environment, others and my intuition about the situation (Yin, 2011) as data. Historically, qualitative researchers had to deal with criticism concerning their close association with participants (Copp, 2008). Accordingly, this would make their research unscientific and open to subjective bias, as if research that is deprived of social contact automatically produces objectivity. Qualitative researchers, upon realising the importance of emotions, do not deny emotional involvement during research. Rather, I converted my emotional responses into data. As noted, I did so by keeping a journal of my emotions and accompanying thoughts to extract data later when required, but I also diarised such aspects directly into this thesis. In this way I utilised my emotions as a source to enhance my understanding of the participants and to monitor my personal growth during the research process. I could make sense of my own subjective responses to reveal the assumptions that accompany them, rather than denying them and their influence on the research findings (Copp, 2008). This facet is also key to the integrated transpersonal approach in which I include my personal transformation as data (Anderson, 2015), and in which research decisions are influenced by my views and interactions (Kitto et al., 2008).

4.5.6.3 Observations

The type of observation involves those I made during the in-person interview (Plano-Clark, 2008). It includes observations about the effect of my presence on the participant being interviewed (Yin, 2011). Most of my observations were captured in field notes during interviews and directly afterward, for later integration into my

reflective journal. As mentioned, I included my intuition as data (Yin, 2011). Intuition is used in field observations by linking theoretical and self-reflective insights to make meaning of observations (Sharf, 2010). I was also attentive to non-verbal behaviour and gestures by participants that could inform my interpretations of what was conveyed (Plano-Clark, 2008). My observations would then help me to interpret a verbal expression as supportive of one theme (or subtheme) instead of another. For example, the following participant's experience may appear to reflect arrogance or superiority: *"If I'm alone I must know I'm the one in uniform. I am the one who is in charge."* However, the body language of the participant, the context, my insight into her intention and related experience guided me to interpret her experience rather as confidence. Documentation of observations made during the interviews (Brodsky, 2008) was done in the field notes, which I reflected on in my researcher journal.

4.6 DATA MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

I recorded data from the interviews and made verbatim transcriptions with the participants' informed consent (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010). To ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonym codes were used when referring to quotations that substantiate interpretations. On completion of the interviews, each one was labelled with the corresponding code allocated against the participant's name on the consent form – PO1 for police officer one (1), TO1 for traffic officer one (1) and so on. Interviews were done in Afrikaans or English. Where interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, transcriptions were first made verbatim. Only verbatim text that was reported on and used in the thesis, were translated into English as substantiation for interpretations.

Possible disadvantages of interviews that were conducted in a language other than that of the thesis (English), is that meaning may get lost in translation. To minimise this risk, contributions were submitted to participants for verification – the extracted substantiating quotations in English. Where quotations could not be verified in person, these were sent to them by means of password protected documents. People who manage data must consider both security aspects of digital and non-digital nature (Corti, 2008). Hence, for added security and the protection of privacy,

passwords were provided via a different electronic medium than the one to which the document was sent. Duplicates of recordings were kept and backups of electronically saved notes were made and stored safely and separately from the original data (Yin, 2011). Data included all notes that I made (Creswell, 2009) and thus my field notes also constituted data relevant to this study. My reflections as researcher were either included while working on the thesis, or kept in a journal to incorporate later. I ensured that important data resources were stored safely throughout the project as well as afterward if necessary (Corti, 2008).

I also ensured the confidential treatment of information by using as little assistance as possible with transcriptions. The transcriber who was responsible for doing the one transcription had to sign a confidentiality agreement containing required and prohibited related conduct (see Annexure D). Apart from that, I was the only one who could store any transcriptions, recordings and who had access to research material. Only I analysed the data and I also kept my journal in safe storage. I used my password protected personal computer to work on and process data.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

As noted in Chapter Two, qualitative data analysis commences when the researcher gains knowledge that influences the manner in which data are or will be interpreted (Morgan, 2008). The qualitative steps themselves have data analysis moving from specific to general steps and at various analytical levels (Creswell, 2009). The strategic cycles of collecting and analysing data within qualitative research do overlap (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Merging steps is ideal in qualitative inquiries and should be viewed as interrelated – not necessarily in a particular order (Creswell, 2009). In keeping with qualitative research tradition, the method of data analysis was interpretive (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Kelly, 2006) and predominantly inductive (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). In this study hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches were integrated to attain the research objective(s). Congruent to the philosophical and metatheoretical assumptions underlying these two methodologies is the particular analysis that was employed namely, thematic analysis and the hermeneutic circle of interpretation.

Hence, the foundations of the applied qualitative analytical technique (figure 4.1) entail the methodological approaches, methods and strategies of collecting and making sense of data.

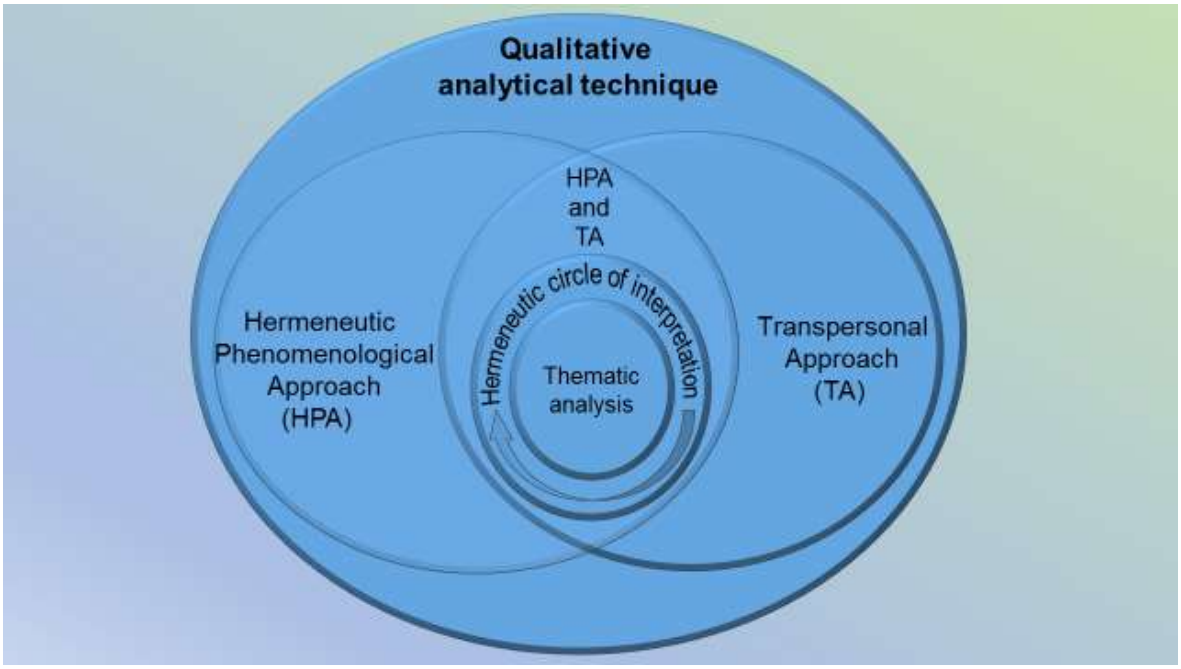


Figure 4.1: Foundations of the applied qualitative analytical technique.

Data analysis contributes toward the collection of data and connecting findings with more complex concepts (Van den Hoonaard & Van den Hoonaard, 2008).

4.7.1 Integrating hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches in the data analysis strategy

Data analysis was guided by Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology as well as the transpersonal approach. Pure phenomenology is suitable for understanding common-place experiences that may be expressed by means of everyday language (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). However, hermeneutical characteristics to phenomenology facilitate interpretive methods, as opposed to only descriptive ones (Adams & van Manen, 2008). I considered my preunderstandings throughout the research process (Kelly, 2006c), characteristic of both hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches. Specifically, the transpersonal aspects of methodology in this research involve the qualities that the researcher

brings to the inquiry and tapping both researcher and participant transformation during the study (Anderson, 2015). The transpersonal research approach calls into consideration the researcher's professional expertise and personal capacities, including intuition (see section 4.7.3), in the exploration of the research topic (Anderson, 2015). This approach is suitable to understand aspects beyond the self (Diaz, 2010) and human transformation (Hartelius et al., 2007). Meaning making through analytic strategies such as thematic analysis is congruent with both approaches (Ayres, 2008).

4.7.2 Thematic analysis and the hermeneutic circle of interpretation

The thematic analytical approach is rooted in how the researcher gathers and organises events and how meaning is communicated to the intended audience (Riessman, 2008). This approach is regularly employed in analysing narrative data (Riessman, 2008; Lindegger, 2006). Understanding is gained through segmenting qualitative data, arranging it into categories and rearranging data so as to capture significant concepts reflected by the data (Ayres, 2008). Themes were identified within events and stories shared by participants – reflecting the patterns, viewpoints, or concerns that are meaningful to them (Benner, 2008). Given the complex nature of the research topic, I also had to incorporate my self-narrative or personal stories into the analysis process (Anderson, 2006), given my own developing authenticity before and during the research process. These were integrated with participant data and included in the thematic analysis. By supporting the themes with examples of texts, which in turn are used to identify additional text in support of the same theme, I kept the theme near to the text (Benner, 2008).

Since thematic analysis is mostly descriptive (Ayres, 2008), the hermeneutic circle of interpretation was employed and manifests throughout the phases of thematic analysis (Anderson, 2004). In applying the hermeneutic circle of interpretation, the whole is understood in relation to its components or parts (Kelly, 2006c). I regard the *whole* to include the phenomenon of developing authenticity within the context of coping and well-being, my orienting lenses, together with data and literature that place the phenomenon within the context of best-self and a bigger picture. The *parts*

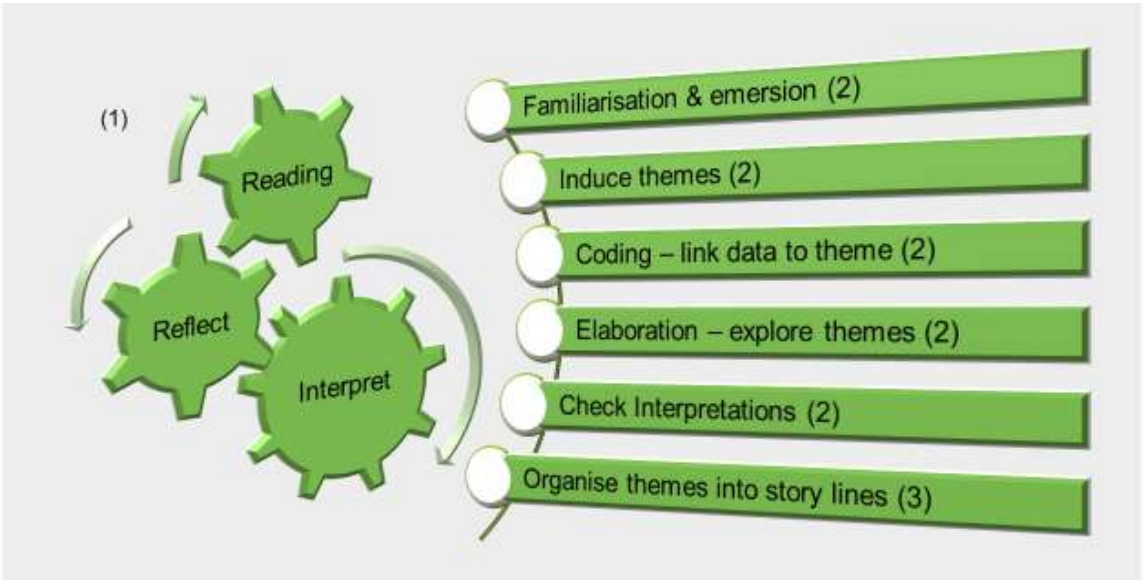
are all of the data and literature that deal with the primary constructs themselves and related constructs (see Chapter Two, section 2.3). However, once these interconnect they also become the whole. Components also comprise my reflections and themes before they link to each other to form a meaningful story of how women develop authenticity. Applying the hermeneutic circle of interpretation thus involved iteratively moving to and fro between all of the mentioned parts, so as to understand developing authenticity in the context of this study. The integration of analytical techniques facilitated a deeper understanding of the research topic (Anderson, 2004) and also reflects the developmental aspect to authenticity.

4.7.3 The process of data analysis

Within hermeneutic phenomenological research the hermeneutic circle holds self-reflection as essential and was incorporated to produce the best possible interpretations (Kafle, 2011; Kelly, 2006c). Within transpersonal research, the hermeneutic circle also provides clarity and structure to the intuitive process involved in interpretation (Anderson, 2004). The elements of the circle were applied throughout the overall interpretive data analysis (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c). For clarity, I illustrate the data analysis process as phases (figure 4.2). Given that interpretation develop from preunderstandings while continuously moving between the whole and component parts, the interpretive process cannot be organised along predetermined set procedures (Laverty, 2003). Nonetheless, a process evolved in the stories women narrated about their coping with challenges.

Data were analysed along the following ways of thinking – reflecting the influence of the guiding paradigms as well:

1) The hermeneutic circle of interpretation views description in itself as interpretation (Kafle, 2011) and integrates aspects of reading, reflective writing and interpretation (Kafle, 2011; Kelly, 2006c; Laverty, 2003). It was employed throughout the research process, from listening, observing, deriving themes, the coding of the data, right through to the writing of the report (Kelly, 2006c). The circle facilitated the use of and critical comparison of data with theory throughout the study (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004).



Integrated from: (1) Laverty, 2003; (2) Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Kelly, 2006; (3) Creswell, 2009.

Figure 4.2: Data analysis process.

2) Familiarisation and immersion involved working with the texts to get to know the data thoroughly (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c).
3) Themes were induced and entailed using the material to label the categorising principles that innately underlie text (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c). I induced themes from the empirical data (Yin, 2011) and from theory with practical relevance to the real life phenomena (Chen, 2007). As alluded to in Chapter Two, I acquired knowledge about participant experiences primarily by induction, but also used deduction – deriving patterns from observations (former) and by logically reaching propositions theoretically (Snape & Spencer, 2003; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006).
4) Coding occurred while developing themes and involved marking and linking parts of data as relevant or pertaining to a theme, or to more than one theme. A word processor's cut-and-paste function was used to extract and reorganise labelled parts under code titles (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c).
5) Elaboration entailed exploring themes more thoroughly, bringing together pieces of text for comparison, spotting extracts under a theme that differ and altering coding where required (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c).
6) Themes were interconnected so as to form story lines of narratives (Creswell,

2009) and to elucidate underlying emotions and thoughts anchoring experiences within the story's structure (Chen, 2007). I looked for data extracts applicable to more than one theme (as with subcategories and subthemes). I considered theoretical links between aspects in much the same manner as described under my reflection in section 2.8, and with figures 2.2 and 2.3 in Chapter Two. The integrative conceptualisation of the three main themes, under section 5.6 in Chapter Five, is a product of my connecting themes into a meaningful story. So is the sequential order of themes, subthemes and subcategories within themes. Throughout, I used the hermeneutic circle of interpretation as exemplified also through my reflection under section 5.7. Hence, I tested the interconnections of aspects against the empirical evidence and my related experiences, but also against theory and literature as illustrated in Chapters Five and Six.

7) Along the hermeneutic circle the interpretations develop from the following: previous understandings; dialectic interchange between components and the whole; integrating text with its context, with literature, with participants and myself as the researcher and within the contexts of both (Laverty, 2003).
8) Interpretations are facilitated by preunderstandings that itself are revised as texts are interpreted, while literature and/or interviewees may be revisited to expand preunderstandings (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). The circular process continues until theory makes practical sense as it pertains to real life experiences (Chen, 2007).
9) Reflective journaling facilitated interpretation and reflection throughout (Laverty, 2003), where I incorporated and account for my personal transformation (Anderson, 2015), while moving between textual parts and the whole (Laverty, 2003).
10) Similarly, feelings, intuitions and mutual influences between researcher and participant must also be reflected on (Yin, 2011). I reflected on the influence of the following on my interpretations: my own contexts, experiences, background and previous understandings (Creswell, 2009).

The transpersonal approach further required of me to relate to participants in a transpersonal way. This approach mirrors the transpersonal research qualities I

employed during the inquiry as explained in Chapter Three (see section 3.4.2), according to Anderson (2015). These informed the exploration into how women develop authenticity and influenced how I handled and interpreted data. In this study I applied these qualities from within an intuitive inquiry approach as follows:

1) I relied on my intuitions to help me clarify and formulate the research topic and related question(s) (Anderson, 2004; Anderson & Braud, 2011). I used my experiences and insights from literature about authenticity to formulate questions that were most likely to facilitate the conceptualisation of authenticity, and to reveal the related transpersonal experiences, processes and outcomes of the phenomenon (Braud, 1998).
2) I formed preliminary lenses, before collecting data, by which to evaluate transformation and change as the research progressed (Anderson, 2004). Lenses are reflected by my views and preconceptions on the research topic introduced in Chapter One. The lenses were expanded on as the study progressed. For example, in Chapter One I had a sense of the metatheoretical lenses which were likely to arise from my preconceptions and literature readings. However, it was only in Chapter Two where I articulated the lenses and *added* the one relating to personality.
3) As mentioned earlier, the transpersonal approach also suits thematic analysis (Tzu et al., 2015) and the collecting, reviewing and organising of data (Anderson, 2004) were discussed already. It was important to keep reflecting on the relevant empirical and theoretical literature (Anderson & Braud, 2011). For example, spiritual needs are central to human nature, while each person is free to embark on the spiritual journey and to choose their own method of self-discovery (Grof et al., 2008). Such aspects not only guided me in ultimately making sense of data, but also helped me to keep an open mind while analysing data. These contributed to remaining aware that developing authenticity may occur differently in participants than in myself, so that I do not impose my preferred ways of development on them.
4) I transformed and refined my preliminary lenses by modifying and expanding my preunderstandings (Anderson, 2004). I incorporated my intuitive processes and insights also into the data collection and analysis,

interpretations and as I presented findings (Anderson & Braud, 2011). These applications are evident and reflected on particularly from Chapters Five to Seven.

5) The intuitive inquiry adopts the hermeneutical circle of interpretation and understanding (Anderson & Braud, 2011), the application of which has also been described earlier. I integrated findings and literature by continuously viewing the phenomenon up close and from afar, re-evaluating literature against findings, by sorting what is valuable or not and showing how I understand the research topic (Anderson, 2004). Hence, the transpersonal aspects entwine particularly well with the elements of reading, reflection and interpretation within the hermeneutic circle.
6) Compassion toward self and others is crucial to understanding (Anderson & Braud, 2011). I have genuine compassion for these participants and a deep need to understand their experiences even more, given the challenges I experienced when I was in law enforcement (see Chapter One and how I relate to participant experiences in Chapters Five to Six).

Interpretations were checked for commonalities and contradictions, and I described the phenomenon through the themes and subheadings produced (Kelly, 2006c). Rigour in data analysis resides in checking and rechecking data for accuracy (Yin, 2011), and (as previously noted) incorporating the hermeneutic analytical circle continuously until narratives make practical sense (Chen, 2007). I evaluate and account for the influence of my axiology on an ongoing basis (Kafle, 2011), which I regularly do through self-reflection. Figure 4.3 gives an overview of my data analysis journey, depicting the factors that influenced interpretations and related groupings comprising subcategories, subthemes, themes as well as synthesised findings. Arrows and/or brackets show links between aspects here and in figures to follow. Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 present overviews of the data structure(s) accounting for the data analysis process regarding the codes, in relation to said groupings, as follows: Themes One to Two; Theme Three (from Chapter Five); and the steps toward creating the framework for developing authenticity (from Chapter Six). The links between the themes of Chapter Five and the framework in Chapter Six are also illuminated, providing a more explicit audit trail of the data structure.

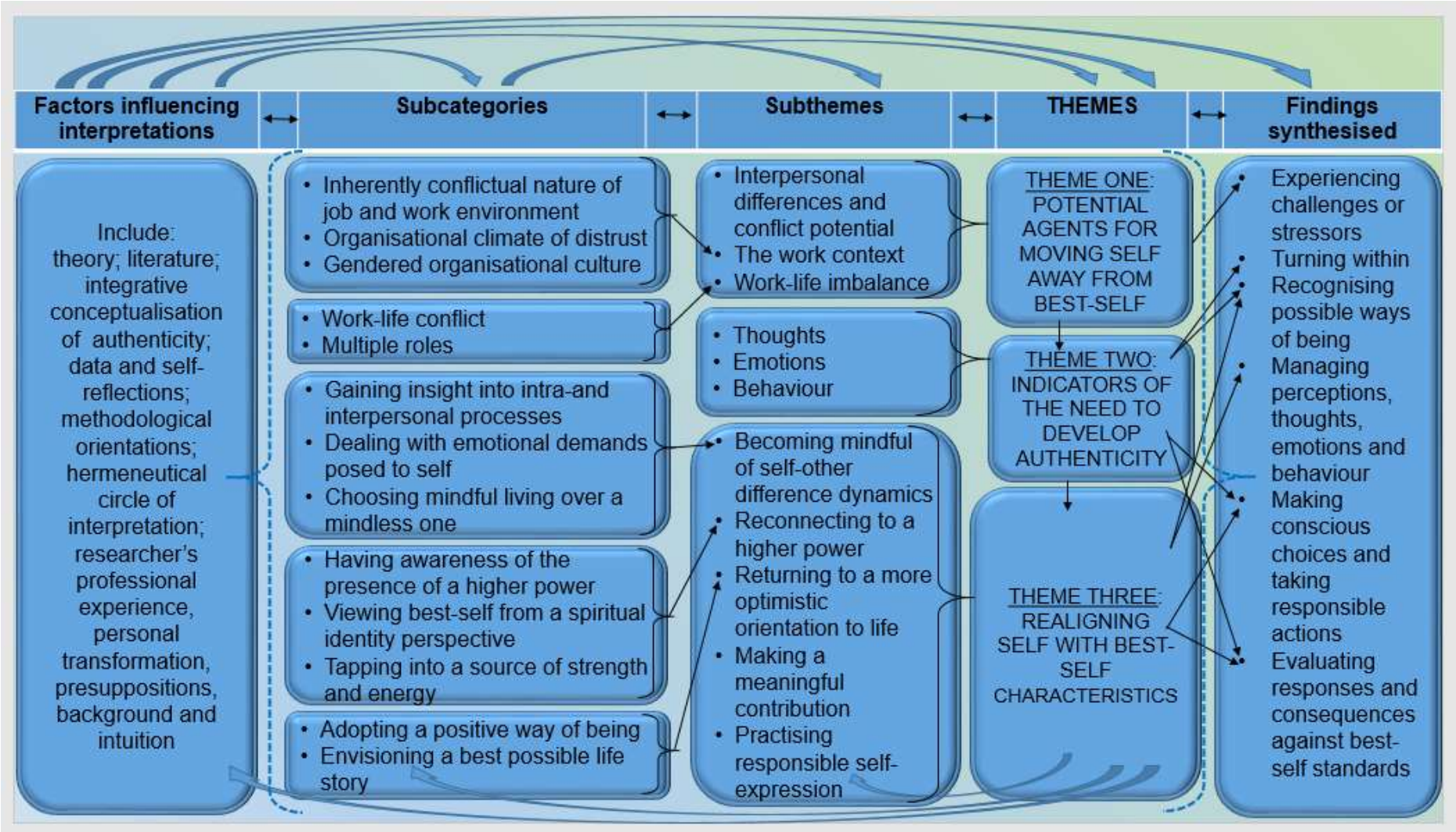


Figure 4.3: Overview of data analysis journey.

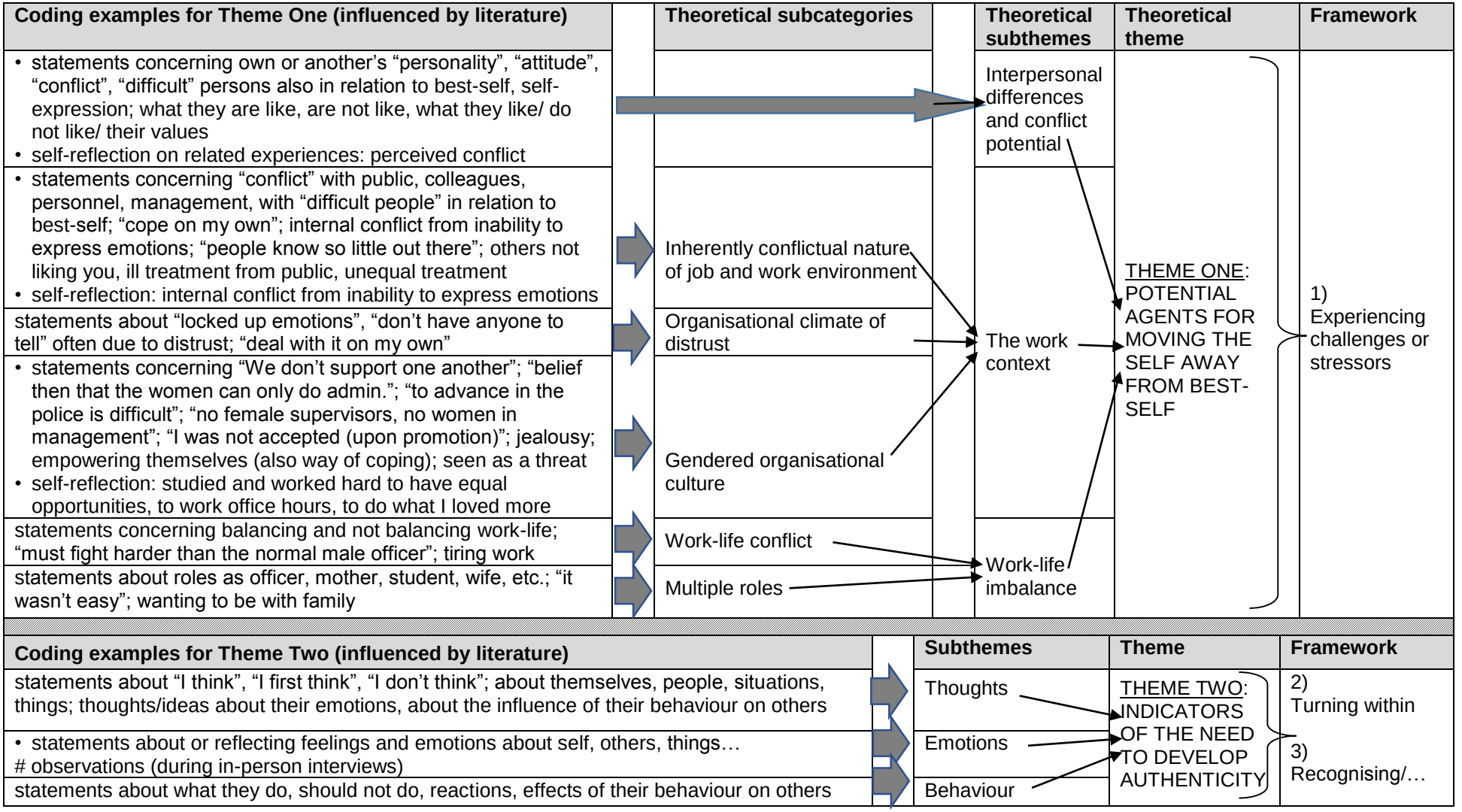


Figure 4.4: Overview of data structure – Themes One and Two

Observations and emotions as data gathering methods explained in Chapter Four, section 4.5.6.

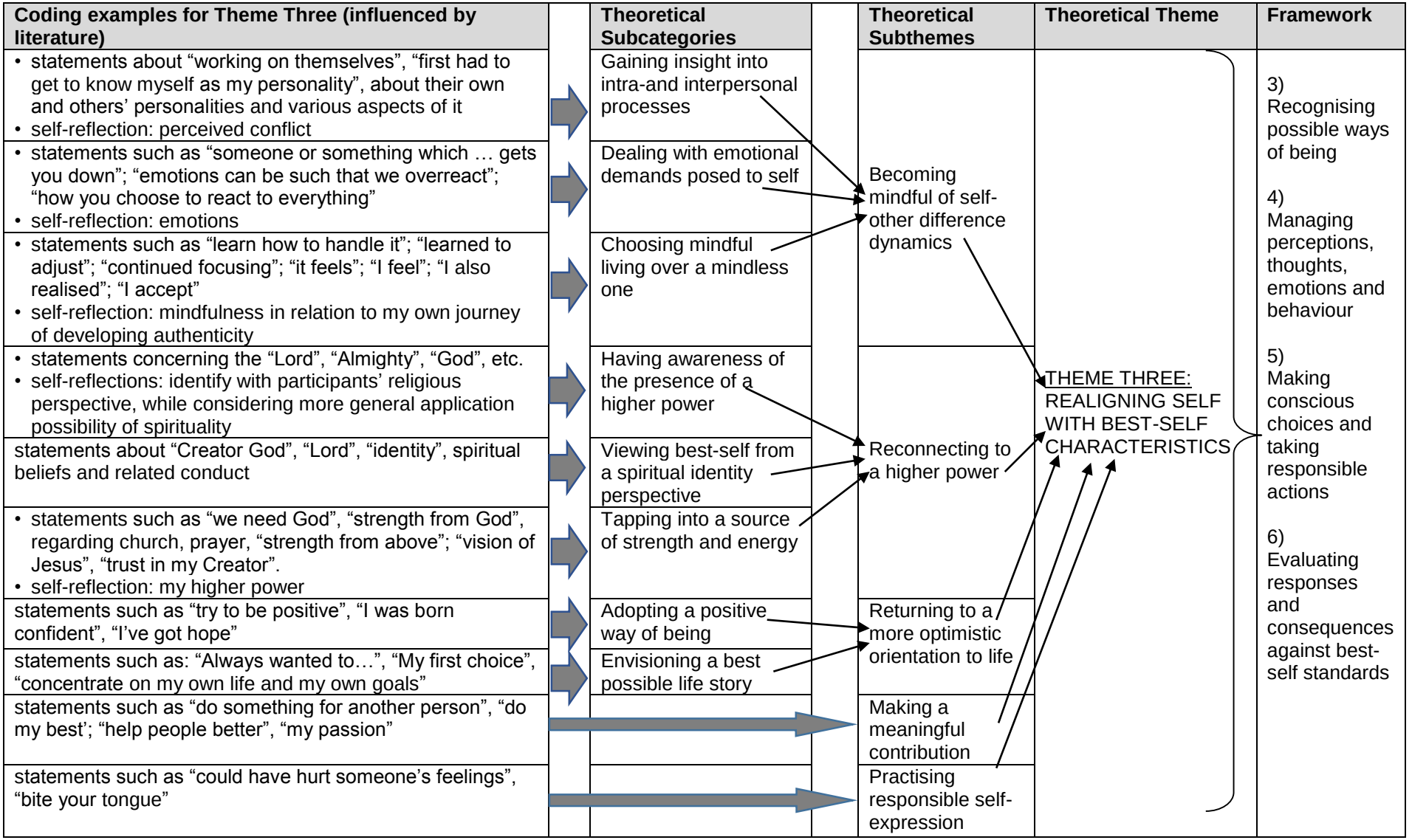


Figure 4.5: Overview of data structure – Theme Three.

Coding examples and reflection toward synthesising findings	Further reflection on theory/ literature/ constructions/ researcher experiences	Theme	PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY
as per Theme One	potential agents for moving the self away from best-self	One	Experiencing challenges or stressors
• statements such as “shift yourself back into your own human being”; “gather my thoughts” • self-reflection: on own need to return to best-self	for example, silencing the “they-self” to be able to hear own self	Two	Turning within
• statements such as “I get angry quickly ... but not that quickly anymore, because I work on it.” • self-reflection: alternative ways for me to be … my choice	authentic or inauthentic; best-self or less than	Two/ Three	Recognising possible ways of being
statements such as “work your own self back into yourself”	emotional intelligence; returning to a more optimistic orientation to life	Three	Managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour
statements such as “never dwell on something that is done”	returning to a more optimistic orientation to life		
statements such as “not be distracted … look forward and do what you are doing”	mindfulness (e.g., learn from experiences)		
statements such as “fear God”	awareness of the presence of a higher power; spiritual intelligence		
statements such as “One gets angry quickly … now I learnt not to attack you immediately”	learning from experiences		
self-refection on my own becoming mindful, reflection on participant mindfulness in relation to literature	becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics		
statements such as “my own willpower and motivation on the inside and these play a very big role in helping me to be my best-self”	Internal locus of control; positive self-concept		
• statements such as “it’s good I did not because then it’s also something that could have hurt someone’s feelings” • self-reflection (e.g., section 6.2.1, third and fourth realisations)	practising responsible self-expression; emotional intelligence	Two/ Three	Making conscious choices and taking responsible actions
reflection on themes: Theme Three reflects the ways in which I employ the personality responses from Theme Two	Include best-self characteristics themselves, with their related skills	Two/ Three	Evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards

Figure 4.6: Overview of data structure – synthesis of findings.

4.7.4 Reflection

The excerpt included here, from my reflective journal, I found particularly valuable at this point in the thesis. It reminds one of Anderson (2015) who stated we should at all times practise what we preach and live according to the spiritual standards that we advocate. It is an example of how I could apply and practise professional know-how in my personal life, which in turn renewed my compassion toward participants. I had to acknowledge my own prejudices, perceptions and consideration of its possible effects if I left these unchallenged. I engaged with my assumptions throughout the study by, for example, having to write them out in this thesis – something I could only do after I thought repetitively about them, read related literature and wrote and rewrote what I thought to be relevant and true to this study. This conscious thinking, reading and reflecting helped me to consciously engage with and revise the lenses through which I view people and situations, ultimately reflecting my own process of becoming and being authentic. The adjustments I made and continue to make also came about from examining my own emotions and thoughts, by evaluating the energy and intentions that I bring to a situation and by attempting to change these if they impede my enhanced understanding.

When I reflected on my initial reactions in the journal excerpt below – in terms of thoughts and emotions – I interpret these to come from a judgemental place. As if I thought that another's way of self-expression is not acceptable to me. In reflecting on my consequent negative affect in this piece of journaling, I realised that in that moment I was choosing (consciously or unconsciously) not to adopt a mode of being authentic. While working with the data I could link participants' negative emotions to their judgements of others. I could see in the data how such emotions and attitudes consequently related to feeling inauthentic. I realised my own judgmental assumptions also do not allow others to be authentic. As a result, I cannot be well, or at least not as well as I can possibly be in the situation. I could identify with the women participants and recognise that I was not well at the time of the journaling episode, because I could notice that I was not feeling love and acceptance for another. My interpretation now is that I was not well because by choosing to feel judgment, I blocked my own ability to see the good, beauty and worth in another – I

blocked my ability to see what is authentic in another. Engaging with and confronting my responses in the manner described contribute to the ethics and trustworthiness of my research. These practices allow me to be transparent and to show how I deal with my negative responses in an attempt to allow the participant to just be (and not who I want them to be). Most of all, I reflected on my responses in my journal (Journal extract 4.1), thinking that my intentions must always align with and lead me toward the attainment of the research objectives.

Journal extract 4.1: I was watching the start of a movie, heard music, and my first impulse was to stop the movie (because I did not like what I was hearing, even though I could not make out the words). But then I saw the words of the song flashing on the screen as well, and decided to continue reading. I realised that it was a story being told. It was "text", just as any other text involved in formal research, which we are required to handle with care, respect, and with the intention to make meaning. When I gave it the same respect, I could appreciate the words, and the change in tone of voice which accompanied various emotional expressions. I could then try to paint a picture of the worlds and the mindsets that produced the text. When I am judgmental and observe something without becoming aware of my judgment – without acknowledging and being honest about my preconceived notions – it is rather difficult to connect with something or someone. It is therefore also difficult to begin to entertain equally relevant aspects pertaining to the context in which that something occurs. Hence, I will never be able to understand another's viewpoint or reality by being in such a state. Even when I judge slang or "made-up" words, it prevents me from discovering the meaning attached to it. When I do research I "preach" so to speak, but my preaching and my practice (whether in personal or professional life) should be aligned always.

The study required the understanding of participant perceptions, but I had to understand and manage my own perceptions as well. The expertise, views and opinions we hold may impede our capacity to recognise that which we do not know (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). I applied various ideas, techniques, or attitudes to manage my personal views, preunderstandings and bias. One that stands out relates to the notion of beginner's mind. Suzuki (2010b) states that the beginner's mind is one that considers numerous possibilities, while the expert's mind considers a few. The mind of the beginner is an empty, open compassionate one, eager to learn about all possibilities (Suzuki, 2010a). It does not imply knowing nothing, but that you are open enough in the present moment, so as not to be limited by what you have

experienced and learnt up to that point (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). Remaining conscious of the intention to keep an open mind, contributed greatly to creating a receptive attitude toward participant experiences. Hence, the phenomenon was the same, but I had changed my understanding and that changed my attitude toward the phenomenon (Suzuki, 2010b). This enabled me to view things exactly the way they are and allow things to follow its own path (Suzuki, 2010a).

4.8 REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION

I used a qualitative writing style to describe and report on the findings of the research, often personalising my application of theory and/or literature. Characteristic to reporting in transpersonal and intuitive inquiries, my writing style had to be compassionate and include my own voice (Anderson, 2004). Data were presented so that it is self-explanatory, described in rich detail (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) and by means of supportive participant quotations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Narratives are framed and presented by means of the contexts within which phenomena occurred, related experiences and by incorporating selected theories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In accordance with the empirical aims of the research, reporting included the framework for authenticity developed to enhance women's well-being within a male-dominated work setting. Additional contributions of findings were also reported on namely, toward the study of well-being as a discipline of psychology, toward the practical world of work and women and the methodological contribution.

For findings to be of value it is necessary to include, as part of the methodological decisions, how these will be disseminated or spread (Butler-Kisber, 2008). This thesis is intended for inclusion in the repository of the university at which I study. I endeavor to publish the findings in article form in a suitable scientific journal. Intended audiences are academics, women who participated in the research, the general public, policy-makers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), as well as people involved in the management of human resources.

4.9 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS IN THE STUDY

Qualitative research must demonstrate trustworthiness and credibility, so that research procedures are transparent, conducted methodically, and based on clear evidence (Yin, 2011). Validity and reliability are still key to rigour (Tullis Owen, 2008), but are replaced in interpretive studies by more salient terms (Bhattacharya, 2008) as described below. Transparency is crucial to all these aspects (Hiles, 2008) and I was transparent about my own transformation and my impact on findings as well (Anderson, 2015). Salient terms stem from the qualitative criterion of trustworthiness, viewed in terms of credibility (Yin, 2011), transferability, as well as dependability and confirmability (Given & Saumure, 2008). I conclude this section by providing rigour criteria more specific to the research approaches.

4.9.1 Credibility

Credibility entails that research findings produced are believable and convincing (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). Possible competing hypothesis involve the identification of factors that may challenge findings. These were dealt with by seeking to understand events, by looking for inconsistent evidence and by accounting for their impact on findings (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). I also ensured credibility by being transparent about my assumptions, prejudices, decisions, selections, methods and justifications (Hiles, 2008). I further enhanced credibility by comparing and integrating empirical data with theory (Yin, 2011) and by being transparent about my own journey (Anderson, 2015). The research design in itself was selected to enable me to meet the study objectives, thus ensuring credibility (Yin, 2011). The research objectives, the selection criteria of women in the purposive sampling and the contextual factors are also described thoroughly (Creswell, 2009).

4.9.2 Transferability

Transferability relates to the extent to which findings of research may provide understandings in various contexts. This was ensured by being transparent through describing the study context and the participant characteristics in detail (see section

4.3) and by providing rich descriptions of experiences (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). Hence, I presented the findings with adequate examples of participant experiences of how they develop authenticity in the male-dominated work environment of law enforcement, for the purpose of enhancing their well-being. I further ensured transferability by describing the research process and methods of the study in detail (Creswell, 2009; Kelly, 2006a).

4.9.3 Dependability

Dependability denotes the degree to which readers believe that the findings happened as portrayed (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). Correspondingly, this was achieved by providing in-depth descriptions of how contextual interaction produced and supports particular actions and views. I further showed if and how empirical findings reinforces or challenges theory (Yin, 2011). Dependability was also ensured by openly describing methods used to collect and analyse data (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006) and by justifying my decisions taken about these as well as theoretical choices made. Accurate representation of participant meaning was ensured by means of obtaining their feedback around intended meanings (Kafle, 2011). The follow-up interviews also contributed to dependability, as these were used to clarify and verify participant experiences and resultant interpretations.

4.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability involves the extent to which the data analysis, interpretations and research findings align with the research purpose, are based on constructions of participants, and not changed by researcher prejudice (Jensen, 2008). It accurately validates the two main aims of qualitative research, being to understand experience from the participant's perspective, and make sense of meanings they ascribe to phenomena (Jensen, 2008). However, in this study the findings are not neutral, as the research design and methodologies required consideration of my presuppositions, prejudices, assumptions and biases. These I was clear about throughout this study and gave accounts of its influences on findings, interpretations, conclusions and decisions, especially through constant reflections. Hence, I ensured confirmability (as with credibility and validity) through the transparency with

which procedures were used (Hiles, 2008). I deemed interpretations to be truthful if several accounts verified a statement (Snape & Spencer, 2003). I showed how I dealt with bias also by including such measures as participant feedback, so as to ensure that meaning making accurately represented their perceptions (Jensen, 2008).

4.9.5 Rigour criteria specific to the research approaches

General to qualitative studies, validity is strengthened through the proper collection, interpretation and descriptions of data and participants' perceptions (Yin, 2011). Van Manen (2016) provided methodological conditions more suitable to hermeneutic phenomenological research. These requirements render convincing validity in researching and writing, and is suitable when researching lived experience. Accordingly, text must have orientation, strength, richness and depth. In applying these conditions in the study, *orientation* meant I needed to be aware of my interest in participant stories, how I observed them, listened to them and related to them. It also means that as a researcher or a theorist, I do not separate public and private, or theory and life. I found that applying transpersonal guidelines and researcher qualities (Chapter Three, section 3.4.2; this chapter, section 4.7.3) helped to satisfy the conditions of Van Manen. My orientation is also made clear in the detailed description of my paradigmatic, metatheoretical and methodological orientations (Chapters One through to Three).

Strength of text means that, whichever interest I acquire as I talk and think about the participants, my intention always had to be to produce the strongest enlightening interpretation of the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, I employed my interest and involvement (orientation) in the research topic toward reaching understanding of the women's experiences, to produce interpretations that have strength (Van Manen, 2016). The final two conditions (richness and depth) are also in relation to the quality of the text produced. Descriptions and interpretations of meanings had to be deep and rich in conveying the nature of participants' everyday lived experience (Van Manen, 2016). Hence, having quotations and interpretations validated by participants also contributed to meeting Van Manen's requirements.

To satisfy rigour particular to intuitive inquiries in transpersonal research, I applied the following measures as prescribed by Anderson (2004). Accordingly, I had to be rigorously subjective – documenting my intuitions and insights, since these had to be included as data. I was detailed in my reasoning processes, making sure that readers of this thesis will understand how I processed my intuitions (e.g., reflections and journal extracts). I had to maintain a perspective that was process-oriented and inclusive of both personal and scientific aspects, which influenced my interpretations. I stayed open to what was possible, in terms of finding new modes of being in this world (particularly evident in Chapters Five and Six). In these regards my supervisor also encouraged me to look for data that contradict my own values and assumptions, but also to be more open about my own experiences as they related to participant experiences and the research topic. I endeavoured to bring about in readers a sympathetic resonance, which I believe I achieved by compassionately conveying participant experiences, while also being true to myself.

Finally, I was open and willing to change (Anderson, 2015) as evident throughout this thesis. I was transformed by the research in that findings gave deeper meaning to my own life, while I trust that readers will experience some change, or at least new ways of thinking about developing authenticity.

4.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I obtained ethical clearance to carry out research from the University of South Africa's Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (see Annexure A). I ensured ethical compliance throughout the research by respecting the dignity and autonomy of participants (Wassenaar, 2009). I obtained informed consent from participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010), informing them of the voluntary nature of taking part in the research, while withdrawal was given as an option at any stage (Ayuk & Jacobs, 2018). The identities of participants were protected using pseudonyms. Confidentiality was ensured in that data were secured and handled primarily by myself. Where assistance was obtained with transcribing, the necessary confidentiality agreement was signed. The agreement made transcriber conduct

explicit in terms of handling data, destroying all forms of material and ensuring participant confidentiality (see Annexure D).

I made sure that no harm and wrongs were suffered by participants, thereby attending to the nonmaleficence principle of ethical research (Wassenaar, 2009). Another principle is that of beneficence, satisfied in that women can benefit from the study (Creswell, 2009). The framework for developing authenticity is meant to be applied to improve coping and well-being in the world of work. They will have access to it to enhance their related skills and knowledge – as part of employee and organisational well-being, career counselling and guidance, as well as by receiving a copy of the thesis and/or intended published article. Related to the issue of benefit is that of justice, which I dealt with by making sure that women were treated with fairness, equity, care (Wassenaar, 2009) and by ensuring that their voices were heard (Johnson-Bailey & Ray, 2008). All other participant rights were thoroughly explained and understood, as contained in the information sheet and informed consent form prepared for this purpose (see Annexure B). The information sheet's content included the research objective, how data were to be collected and used, and the nature of participation. It also included information on the storage and ultimate destroying of data, how final research findings will be communicated to them, as well as intentions for publication.

4.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter Four presented the design of the research and its methods. I commenced by discussing the choice of a qualitative research design, given its suitability to study the complex phenomenon of how women develop authenticity. The guiding paradigm was interpretive, and hermeneutic phenomenology as well as a transpersonal methodological approach informed the methods employed to achieve the research objective. I described the research context thoroughly, thus shedding light on why women in law enforcement may experience stress that in turn may challenge their well-being. Within the research methods I discussed the population and sampling. I described the data collection and explained the role of myself as primary instrument in collecting, analysing and interpreting data. My role in the

research process meant that I had to be willing to undergo personal growth and transformation – in relation to refining skills such as listening and interpreting, while also developing such qualities as employing intuition, compassion, appreciation and love toward participants. Aspects related to the data management and security were also discussed. I have a responsibility to produce the best possible interpretations as described by Kafle (2011). Hence, I described how data were analysed by applying the integrated approaches to the data analysis strategy. A description was then given of how research findings will be reported on and disseminated. I also discussed how trustworthiness and rigour were ensured in this study and concluded with ethical considerations. It takes a brave participant to reveal to the researcher all of who they are and can be, and I have a responsibility to treat their experiences and data as precious and with care.

Chapter Five follows, presenting the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INTEGRATION – CORE THEMES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research findings are presented in Chapter Five as three core themes, which resulted from analysis of narrative interview data (see Chapter Four: section 4.7). This chapter is predominantly reflective of interpretations through the hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The self-reflective element, applied to further construct meaning with regard to developing authenticity, demonstrates the influence of the transpersonal approach being continuous throughout this thesis. However, because my own transformation has been influenced in profound ways by working with the data, theory and related literature, the application of the transpersonal approach is demonstrated more particularly in Chapter Six.

Findings are described in this chapter by integrating and comparing the themes and its content against literature and with supporting participant experiences. Understanding of the research topic required reflection, while shifting back and forth between parts of the phenomenon and the whole (Kelly, 2006c). Hence, the hermeneutic circle of data analysis (Chapter Four, section 4.7.3) was a predominant analytic strategy in the data analysis process (Kafle, 2011). Together with the methodological and theoretical orientations on which the present research is based, various aspects, therefore, influenced coding and the development of themes. These included literature reviewed, professional experience, concepts that informed the data collection (Ayres, 2008), as well as the researcher's transformation, presuppositions and background (Anderson, 2015; Heidegger, 1953/1996). Analytic strategies align with the philosophical foundations underpinning my methodological choices (see Chapters One and Three) and with the theoretical contributions that informed the study (see Chapter Two). Findings are conceptually integrated further in Chapter Six, where the framework for developing authenticity is presented. The extent to which aspects used to develop the final framework originated from myself, participants or literature, was illustrated in the previous chapter with figures 4.4 to 4.6.

Next, I recall the metatheoretical lenses that influenced interpretations by presenting an integrative conceptualisation of authenticity and introduce the themes that were constructed from the data, with this conceptualisation in mind. Thereafter, a detailed discussion of each of the three core themes follows.

5.2 AN INTEGRATIVE CONCEPTUALISATION OF AUTHENTICITY FOUNDATIONAL TO THE THEMES

In light of the fact that preconceived and evolving metatheoretical understanding influenced the construction of meaning during data analysis, an integrative conceptualisation of the metatheoretical influences is valuable before continuing to discuss themes that resulted from the data.

As established with the literature review in Chapter Two (figures 2.2 and 2.3), there were noteworthy and multiple overlaps between aspects in the three primary constructs of authenticity, coping and well-being. Aspects of thoughts, emotions and behaviour were found to interweave across these constructs. The definition of authenticity developed and proposed in Chapter Two of this thesis and, as depicted in figure 5.1 below, reflects such overlaps and presents an integrative conceptualisation of authenticity, significant to how I interpreted the data. For example, “adaptive responses” reflect coping, while “corresponding consequences” may relate to well-being as a consequence. As the whole of the phenomenon is understood only in relation to its components (Kelly, 2006c), sections of data may be relevant to more than one conceptual idea (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c). As such, the integrative conceptualisation of authenticity is vital to the three primary themes that were constructed from the data. Each aspect in this integrative conceptualisation links to themes and subthemes identified in the data, because this definition of authenticity basically reflects a synthesis of my metatheoretical lenses.

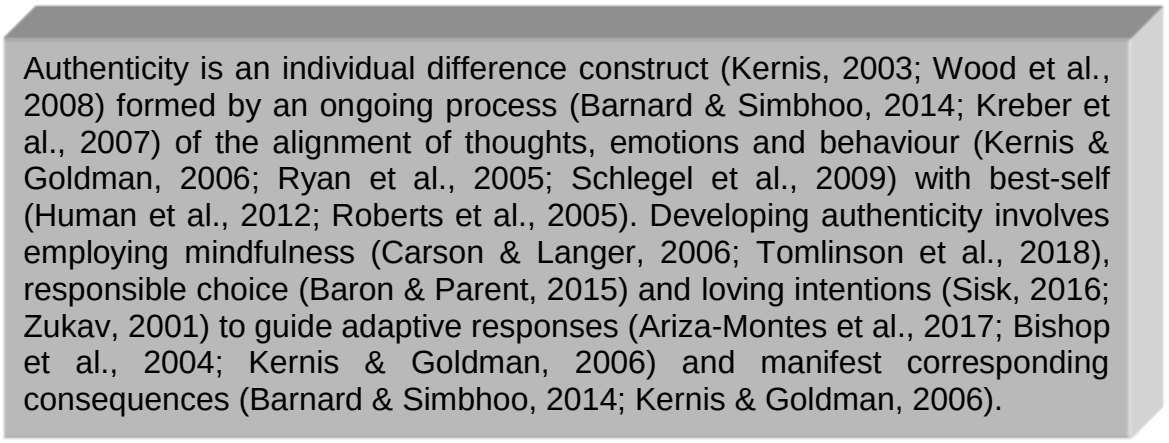


Figure 5.1: An integrative conceptualisation of authenticity.

The data required for analysis were produced primarily by interviews, while emotions and observations were also recorded as data because these influenced interpretations and meaning making in this study (see Chapter Four, Sections 4.5.5 to 4.5.6). The themes that are discussed in the remainder of the chapter reflect the patterns, viewpoints, or concerns developed from the data as meaningful to participants (Benner, 2008). The temporal manner in which the opening core question, in particular, was organised served to uncover the thinking behind connections of experiences in participant stories (Ayres, 2008). Connecting themes and organising them into storylines (Creswell, 2009), helped to reveal the thoughts and emotions on which women's experiences were based (Chen, 2007).

As I have explained, ultimately interpretations, however, arose from prior metatheoretical understandings and from integrating text with contexts (e.g., Chapter Four, table 4.2), with literature, with participants and with researcher experiences (Laverty, 2003). The integrative conceptualisation of authenticity is therefore foundational to the following main themes constructed from participants' experiences, concerning developing authenticity: *potential agents for moving the self away from best-self, indicators of the need to develop authenticity,* as well as *realigning self with best-self characteristics.* Each theme is constructed on related subthemes, while some subthemes have also been constructed from related subcategories that transpired from the data. A synopsis of all the themes is presented in table 5.1 below, forming the basis for the remainder of the chapter discussion.

Table 5.1: Themes with subthemes and subcategories

THEMES	Subthemes	*Subcategories*
ONE: **POTENTIAL AGENTS FOR MOVING THE SELF AWAY FROM BEST-SELF**	**Interpersonal differences and conflict potential**	
	The work context	• *Inherently conflictual nature of job and work environment* • *Organisational climate of distrust* • *Gendered organisational culture*
	Work-life imbalance	• *Work-life conflict* • *Multiple roles*
TWO: **INDICATORS OF THE NEED TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY**	**Thoughts**	
	Emotions	
	Behaviour	
THREE: **REALIGNING SELF WITH BEST-SELF CHARACTERISTICS**	**Becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics**	• *Gaining insight into intra-and interpersonal processes* • *Dealing with emotional demands posed to self* • *Choosing mindful living over a mindless one*
	Reconnecting to a higher power	• *Having awareness of the presence of a higher power* • *Viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective* • *Tapping into a source of strength and energy*
	Returning to a more optimistic orientation to life	• *Adopting a positive way of being* • *Envisioning a best possible life story*
	Making a meaningful contribution	
	Practising responsible self-expression	

In the remaining chapter sections, I present the three core themes by thoroughly integrating supportive literature, related participant as well as my own experiences.

5.3 THEME ONE: POTENTIAL AGENTS FOR MOVING THE SELF AWAY FROM BEST-SELF

Various challenges or stressors are involved along women's journeys of developing authenticity, which serve as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self. Similarly, in relation to best possible selves, Layous et al. (2012) discussed how challenges and stressors may divert our attention away from the things that give life value, meaning and that fulfil our innermost needs. In this study authentic self is equated with best-self, as best-self makes it possible to reveal one's authentic self (Human et al., 2012). The related negative affect or stress from such challenges or stressors may bring about the need for coping (Bergh, 2009d; Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017). Therefore, the negative affect also results in the need for developing authenticity to enhance well-being. This notion resonates with findings from Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) who linked inauthenticity to negative emotions and a consequent need to adjust the self, while feeling authentic facilitates subjective well-being. In the traditionally male-dominated work environment of law enforcement, it is the experience of the challenges or stressors that may lead women to feel that they are out of touch with their best selves. Subthemes constructed in relation to this theme include *interpersonal differences and conflict potential, the work context,* as well as *work-life imbalance* – all as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self in the authenticity dynamic. Where subcategories developed, these are discussed where applicable.

5.3.1 Subtheme: Interpersonal differences and conflict potential

Interpersonal differences and conflict potential transpired as a major challenge or stressor for participants – in relation to colleagues as well as the public. What they describe stems from how individual differences or conflicting personality dynamics play out in their world of work (Bergh, 2009a). Hence, the interpersonal differences and related conflict potential experienced by participants related to aspects such as attitudes, perspectives, handling conflict, communication styles as well as managerial styles. Since personality entails all the various ways people tend to react to their environment and interact with each other (Moerdyk, 2009), the potential for

conflict lies in all these interpersonal differences, as reflected by the following experiences:

> *His personality results in no one liking him*. (PO1)
> *If you were a manager, do you think you would have come asked me who has an attitude, and I say no? You're going to work with people … who want to work.* (TO6)
> *Some people are very stubborn in a conflict situation … or they are too proud to admit they are sorry.* (TO2)
> *I'm a straight forward person and I'm very strict. That's one thing that the people don't like about me.* (PO4)

Interpersonal differences were often perceived and described by participants as themselves or others being difficult, reflecting the potential of such differences to move the self away from best-self. One participant explicitly narrated difficult people in her workplace as a challenge to her remaining her best-self. Another participant described how it is precisely the practice in dealing with difficult people, which enables her to ultimately cope better in such situations. This view corresponds with Kernis (2003) who stated that authenticity may help understand the adaptive nature of personality aspects. The different experiences also show that some individuals may be able to perform at their best and adjust better, while others may find it challenging to cope under similar stressors (Diener et al., 1999; May, 2009). Sometimes others may not like it when these women express the stronger or more assertive parts of their personalities. Such expressions may influence the perceptions others have about them as well as the attitudes others have toward them, as reflected by these statements:

> *I'm a difficult person … I've got strong personality character. Whether you like it.* (PO3)
> *When you deal with difficult people who causes you to forget who you are, that brings out the ugly in you, is when I am no longer my best-self.* (PO2)
> *When he [supervisor] was dealing with a difficult motorist … he threw me in the deep end. I knew how to cope when it was my time to be one-on-one with a difficult motorist*. (TO1)

And should I express myself then I am [perceived as] arrogant. (PO6)

Interpersonal and/or personality differences may challenge those who experience personalities different to their own, in that these may have them acting contrary to whom they know themselves to be, or want to be. However, everyone's personality differs (Moerdyk, 2009), so that the personality aspects with which we respond when coping (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009) also differ. Further, while we may be able to adapt well in one interpersonal context, we may struggle to cope well in another (Neff, 1977; Wagerman & Funder, 2009). What makes participants' situations unique is that the personality differences in a law enforcement context may bring out and/or attract "difficult" personalities, as already noticed in experiences above. In turn, such personalities may have conflict potential in the relationship that one has with the self and others. As a result, women may then feel out of touch with themselves since adopting a mode of being contrary to best-self, such as not being loving or being angry, is not how they see themselves as being. They described related experiences as follows:

> *I also love people very much. But when I find out you have disappointed me … I talk to God … I say Lord … I am not like that. Take it away so we can go on.* (TO4)
>
> *I do not like that [getting angry], I like to live in peace with everybody.* (PO5)
>
> *You can change, the police, this organisation can change your behaviour easily. But if you have those strong values that I talk about, then you will survive in this organisation.* (PO4)

The women's experiences reflect how various aspects coexist in individuals such as traits, characteristics, cognitive processes and emotional tendencies (Kernis, 2003). Their experiences also show that individual characteristics of those involved may often be blamed for conflict, and managing related interpersonal conflict involves the degree to which the needs of parties are met or not (Bergh, May & Naidoo, 2009).

I recall my experiences when in the law enforcement environment. Even when potential conflict was only perceived and did not yet manifest (Bergh et al., 2009), the fact that I blamed others for what I felt, caused me to lose part of myself to them

and to the situation. When I blame others, I do not feel well and I do not feel my best-self, because I have allowed them to dictate how I respond. Also, when people are just like me in how they react I experience no challenge from them, but when they differ from me in some way I may have difficulty in allowing them to be who they are. Then I may very well be blaming another for not being like me, or how I want them to be. Hence, I opine that it was already my internal response (blame) to my perception of a person as difficult or different, which had the potential to move the self away from best-self. Not just colleagues, but the work environment had the potential to make me lose touch of my best-self.

5.3.2 Subtheme: The work context

The work context in itself may serve as potential agent for moving the self away from best-self, precisely because of the nature of law enforcement. Inherent work conditions of police officers and traffic officers inevitably carry with them challenges and stressors (Madu & Poodhun, 2006; Rothmann, 2008; Van Heerden, 1990). Conflict within the participants' world of work stems from factors inherent to their work environment and work duties (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006). This subtheme produced subcategories that comprised the following: *inherently conflictual nature of job and work environment, organisational climate of distrust* and a *gendered organisational culture.*

5.3.2.1 Inherently conflictual nature of job and work environment

Participants revealed that conflict is practically unavoidable, more so given the nature of their jobs – be it with colleagues, personnel, management, within the gender context, or with the public. Officers have to enforce the law, deal with violence and crime (*Criminal Procedure Act,* 1977) and may be exposed to trauma when carrying out their duties. They face various threats or risks when getting into situations that are possibly harmful and that may threaten their own and others' lives. This facet aligns with Mushwana (1998) as well as Smith and Charles (2010), who described how officers are exposed to potential injury and danger. When participants talk about their challenges or stressors to others, they describe coping

with such aspects by letting these out. The inherently conflictual nature of their job and work environment can be seen from the following responses:

> *I deal with conflict on a daily basis outside with the public, and I also deal with conflict situations daily with my colleagues.* (TO2)
> *In traffic, you face conflict daily … with your personnel, with your management. (*TO3)
> *Things that I attended like suicides and murders ... I cope on my own ... but one talks to your colleagues and get it out of you.* (PO5)
> *You're supposed to control the traffic and there's nothing you can do for the person who's crying there in pain. You must just gather yourself because you must now prevent another accident from happening on top of the other one.* (TO1)

I think about how such incidents affected me. You focus on what needs to be done, such as securing and preserving the scene or regulating the traffic to prevent secondary accidents. Usually, there is no time to focus on the injured persons, especially in the case of traffic officers. There are other emergency services whose primary role it is to attend to those aspects. However, I remember one time when I attended an accident scene in which almost an entire family was killed. I wanted to cry, but believed that I could not cry on the scene. Not being able to express my emotions created conflict within me, as described by Mayer et al. (2018). In such instances, I felt out of touch with myself and did not feel well. Similarly, when interacting with members of the public who were rude, I found it "better" not to react at all. However, this did not mean that my heart was not hurt sometimes, or that I was not affected by conflict.

When it comes to traffic officers, the potential for conflict appears to be attached also to the perception road users may have of traffic officers and of the uniform itself. Conflict with the public may, therefore, become even more intense, in comparison to that experienced by police officer participants. The stories of police officer participants did not produce such dislike and contempt from the public as a result of their uniform and/or profession. Road user reactions may be fuelled by anger and be deliberately hurtful toward traffic officers. Pienaar (2007) also reported on the

negative attitudes of the public toward traffic officers and stated that these may be attributed to the public not being knowledgeable, their legal disobedience and their negative attitude toward road safety. The fear and dislike that some people associate specifically with the traffic uniform may then influence how they view and treat traffic officers, as illustrated by these responses:

> *People know so little out there. A tyre whose canvas is showing, all that, they don't know it's a threat to themselves … And in the traffic environment, you are the one, the minute you're in uniform, people don't like you.* (TO1)
> *When you are in uniform then people see you as the enemy, as danger … so people put that stigma to traffic officers.* (TO3)
> *Even when they [road users] curse and stuff at me, I won't sink to their level and curse as well.* (TO5)
> *He [motorist] was on a high [from anger] ... he gave me quite a sarcastic telling-off.* (TO6)

Lack of support is a source of stress (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006), which also reflects the inherently conflictual nature of the job. In such instances, conflict may result because women receive unequal treatment in the place of work (Kidd, 2008). Aspects of lack of support, related conflict and unequal treatment, with their supportive participant experiences are elaborated on later under section 5.3.2.3, as these also transpired under experiences related to gender in the work context. The various conflictual aspects described have the potential for moving the self away from best-self. However, if one wants something other than conflict to play out in life, one must contribute something different to the situation (Suzuki, 2010b; Zukav, 2001). Hence, conflict acts as potential agent for moving the self away from best-self, if that which you feel as a result is not in line with best-self. The inherently conflictual nature of the job and environment further appears to influence the way individuals feel about others and the organisation.

5.3.2.2 Organisational climate of distrust

A climate of distrust is an aspect of the work context that may have the potential to move the self away from best-self. This was reflected particularly by participants

who brought up the issue of employee coping support, which they feel is lacking in the workplace. The organisational climate is created by transactional or everyday interactions (Burke & Litwin, 1992). It comprises the feelings, expectations and impressions employees have, which affect interactions with each other, with supervisors and with other departments (Martins & Coetzee, 2009). Luthans (2011) describes the organisational climate as the predominant feeling portrayed by how members interact, how employees conduct themselves with clients or outsiders, as well as the layout of the physical environment. A negative organisational climate of distrust can result in individuals in this study not wanting to talk to others, or to not use the resources made available at organisational level. Thus, an envisioned supporting climate is undermined by a climate of distrust and poor communication. One participant narrated that there was no space created within the workplace where one could say how you felt about things, to deal with emotions deep within. Where support was available, another participant did not always feel like turning to the employee assistance programmes. Van der Walt (2018) describes that trust is necessary for individuals to feel safe to discuss their personal concerns and problems. The issue of trust or confidentiality therefore also came up as a factor that may keep officers from seeking or accepting coping support, whether formal or informal. Supportive responses to this subtheme were as follows:

> *So you have a lot of locked up emotions with which you must deal … a platform is not really created at work where you can say how you feel about it.* (TO3)
>
> *Like cases we attend … it upsets a person, but to cope with it we have the necessary people to talk to, and the channels are there, but one does not always feel … you think that you will be okay.* (PO5)
>
> *You know when you are alone you don't have anyone to tell anything … and I know if I tell somebody here [at work] … that somebody will talk about that … so you feel you must keep things inside.* (PO4)

This aligns with findings by Nzonzo (2017), who states that employees were also distrustful regarding the confidentiality of employee wellness programs. Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2017) also found that counselling services at the departmental level were experienced by traffic officers as inadequate to help them cope with demands,

so that issues were sometimes never dealt with. Hence, a participant preferred not to make use of these programs at all, while another experienced it as not having worked for her:

> *I realised I'm not the only one feeling this way, but for me, I have to deal with it on my own.* (PO1)
>
> *At work we go through [X counselling service], they phone somebody you can talk to somebody on the telephone … that didn't work for me. Because that person [asks] how are you feeling today, should we send somebody … we had group [debriefing] so that didn't work for me … I'm a very strong person and I'm very spiritual.* (TO1)

Participants in this study may not necessarily make use of employee coping support structures from their work environments. These structures were conveyed by them to include their employee assistance programs (EAP) with help from within the organisation itself. Other employers make use of external consultants or consultancy groups. According to TO1, the latter may involve telephonic communication that she particularly did not care for. Nonetheless, Pienaar and Rothmann (2003) studied coping strategies in police officers and found that they approach their emotional reactions as opposed to avoiding them. In the study at hand, data throughout do suggest that women are developing their internal resources to cope with challenges or stressors. The experience of an organisational climate as one that they cannot trust to help them deal with their stressors, initiates a need to develop coping methods on their own. The organisational climate influences the organisational culture (Luthans, 2011), which was constructed as another potential agent for moving the self away from best-self.

5.3.2.3 Gendered organisational culture

Some participants described their views around the organisational culture. These views may pertain to their perceptions around competition driven by gendered norms. Generally, organisational culture includes recognisable behavioural consistencies, beliefs on how to treat employees and customers, rules on getting along and overriding values and norms (Luthans, 2011). Norms and more

specifically, gender role norms manifest when people see how the majority of people behave in social encounters; when they come to know acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for different genders and observe the actions of men and women who are popular (Mahalik et al., 2003). Rank and gender are some factors associated with occupational stress (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006), while unequal treatment at work (Kidd, 2008) may reflect the potential of a gendered work environment to move the self away from best-self. Within the police law enforcement environment specifically, women in this study may often have been assigned administrative work, as opposed to functional work like men (Newham et al., 2006). From participants' experiences, it appears though that there has been an improvement in exposing women to operational work (Newham et al., 2006). Nonetheless, Martin and Barnard (2013) state that organisational practices that sustain gender discrimination and unfairness are experienced by women as challenging. Double standards create conflict not only in a male versus female context, but also between females themselves. Sometimes women themselves may not be encouraging or supportive of each other or of their female senior officers. Their experiences can be seen from the following statements:

> *We don't support one another. And if [X] is a supervisor and I am just under you, and you are female, it's easy for another female to bash or to pull another female down. Now we don't understand why men don't applaud female individuals in top positions whereas us females we create that sometimes ourselves first.* (TO1)
>
> *People do not like her ... what a person also must understand is that she is a [senior], she cannot be buddies with everybody, she is in that position.* (PO1)
>
> *In the beginning, when I returned from college I worked inside more, and the men were sent out.* (PO2)
>
> *I started my career in the office because there was that belief then that the women can only do admin.* (PO4)

When women behave in ways that contradict the gender role expectations of society, or if they receive different treatment to men due to gender stereotypes, then conflict arises (Mayer et al., 2018). For example, participant experiences reflect that females in more senior positions in the law enforcement environment are not the

norm. They perceive upward mobility as difficult and because it is not the norm, it may bring about non-acceptance of situations, persons, or of positions of authority held by women:

> *To advance in the police is difficult. You are stuck for long on a level.* (PO2)
> *At the moment there are no female supervisors, no women in management.* (TO6)
> *I was not accepted [upon promotion].* (PO4)

Organisational culture involves the shared perceptions employees have about the characteristics that are valued in an organisation and about how things are done in it (Martins & Martins, 2001). There is a perception that women must work harder than their male counterparts to secure similar privileges and positions. Du Plessis and Barkhuizen (2015) described how limited career advancement opportunities may reflect gender discrimination within the workplace. The women who succeed in securing senior positions may then experience new related challenges such as still not being accepted or respected by others, once in their new posts. One participant described how it became colder and more difficult as you move up the ranks. Another described her challenges as a woman with an additional tertiary education, struggling to gain acceptance from colleagues who occupy high ranks with her, but with lower educational levels and longer service years:

> *We have to fight so much harder for the same, to be treated equally, to get certain privileges and also to get into a position like the male colleagues.* (TO2)
> *Yes, things were bad ... in the organisation as you go up it's becoming colder and more difficult.* (PO4)
> *Last time I had to stand up [for myself] in front of one … telling me [he has] 23 years' experience ... I said … let me tell you, I worked for my promotions.* (PO3)

Although unequal opportunities do exist in relation to advancement opportunities for women, some of them then cope with such challenges by working harder than men to secure similar opportunities. They may also pursue additional qualifications

through studies. I believed if I studied and worked hard, I would advance so as to be able to work office hours, to have equal opportunity to do aspects of the job that I loved more and to have more time at home. Edgar Schein views organisational culture as assumptions a particular group holds of acceptable ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling on how to cope with challenges of adaptation (Luthans, 2008). Hence, empowering themselves becomes a coping response at least among some women, if not in the dominant organisational culture. Subcultures are likely to develop within organisations as reflections of shared problems, experiences or situations (Martins & Martins, 2001), in this case reflecting women's challenges to advance in the organisation. Further, women may come to view empowering themselves as something that works. Others may become interested in doing so as well, as reflected by these experiences:

> *But given the fact that I grew and became stronger, and also the fact that I had better qualifications [additional] gave me much more exposure to different areas and directions in my occupation.* (TO2)
>
> *Then in the meantime I studied further, so … in a few years I see myself as a senior if things go well.* (TO6)
>
> *So I feel I want to do more courses to empower myself … before I was not really challenged [when she did more admin] … but now that things changed I feel I want to grow as a person.* (PO2)
>
> *I didn't realise that, okay if I had to go and study further … I can empower myself … If I knew then that okay I was still young.* (TO1)

Furthermore, masculine norms of success typically include power and status (Mahalik et al., 2003), so that women who do show signs of moving toward these may be perceived as threats by colleagues. Participants who perceived others as being threatened by them share being ambitious and hardworking. Their contextual factors (see table 4.2) further reflect that they have some or all of the following things in common: possessing additional training, tertiary education, doing specialised or additional tasks and performing supervisory or managerial functions. Hence, although women consequently do work harder than men to acquire similar opportunities, they may still receive backlash upon having attained these. This may be a direct result of other colleagues associating certain opportunities or positions

with power and success within the work context. Berdahl (2007) stated that women may particularly be seen as threats by others when they portray characteristics or occupy roles usually associated with men, such as being outspoken or doing "male" jobs. Accordingly, the threat arises because the imagined boundaries that distinguish men and women become unclear, and others may reject or humiliate persons for doing so. The rejection from others for them "having made it", or for having defied such norms, is reflected also by the jealousy they may perceive from others, as described by these responses:

> *Some of the people don't accept you, and they will do things to see to it that you fall … because with us people tend to be jealous.* (PO4)
> *Here's a lot of negativity and envy, jealousy and everything.* (TO4)
> *I accept that people will sometimes feel threatened because you are hardworking.* (TO2)
> *[In] this environment it is all about the threat, the old people become scared of us and they don't want to accept things change.* (PO3)
> *And should I express myself then I am [perceived as] arrogant.* (PO6)
> *It is still challenging, but I still learn more every day … because I want to do my job well. Initially it was a bit strange … people do not always receive you well because they see you as competition. So yes sometimes I feel a bit withdrawn but I try not to let them get me down.* (TO6)

Not just female seniors, but also women who perform tasks outside of their job descriptions conveyed experiencing derogatory office talk, about why they were afforded certain opportunities over others. Sias and Jablin (1995) studied coworker communication with regard to differential superior-subordinate relations and considered the issue of jealousy in the workplace. They found that colleagues who perceive treatment of a counterpart as unfair – as with differential treatment – were more likely to converse with each other about it. In addition, when a feeling such as jealousy is involved, the judgments about fairness may not be rational (Sias & Jablin, 1995). Others may then be insulted based on their sex, in an effort to protect someone's social status and accompanying benefits, when these are perceived as being threatened (Berdahl, 2007). Hence, some participants may have their gender

attacked. For example, these responses show they may have to contend with the stress of malicious rumours, such as having slept with someone to secure an opportunity or a position:

> *That is none of your business if I became … I said I never slept my ways up.* (PO3)
>
> *Instead of looking at [X] who now got this position and say, if she can do it she's inspired or motivated me … I will go around and say, no she slept with someone to get that position.* (TO1)
>
> *They see you as competition … the jealousy is terrible … and the problem is because I am willing if they ask me to do something I don't say no … then ugly stories went around.* (TO6)

I infer that their related stress does not necessarily derive from competing with others. This is because participants' motivation, definition of success, or career aspirations are not necessarily underpinned by power or status. They may be perceived as competing. However, they do what they do not to get ahead, but for other reasons such as getting balance in life (Kim, 2004). They also want to be viewed as equals. In their minds however, to arrive on equal footing means that they have to put in more, so you may see them engaging in the attainment of additional qualifications (became apparent earlier). Also, such activities contribute toward mastering one's work tasks – a component of well-being in the work context (Leppänen, 2001), which can be seen as development toward best-self at work. Hence, to be one's best-self at work, you would either want to be able to do your work the best you can, and/or you would want to advance into the best possible position. However, this does not mean to search for power in the traditional sense of the word. Rather toward cultivating power from within that – without manipulating or harming others (Zukav, 2001) – can satisfy the needs of best-self. Therefore, an organisational culture that does not support women's unique needs may cause stress when participants are not given an opportunity to express their best selves in the workplace. Further, in an organisational culture where women now value having to work so much harder to ensure equal opportunities, maintaining a balance between work and life may become more difficult.

5.3.3 Subtheme: Work-life imbalance

Another challenge or stressor was that of work-life imbalance. It involves the need to create a balance between career and home while managing the conflict that arises from multiple roles (Mayer et al., 2018). The potential for the self to move away from best-self arises when women experience that their work schedule does not afford them enough time to engage in other life roles, which they also deem as important. These other roles typically have meaning and actualisation value to them as well, such as the mother role or the student role. This subtheme is described by the subcategories of work-life conflict and multiple roles.

5.3.3.1 Work-life conflict

As working women, participants may experience work-life conflict. They may then struggle to find *work-life balance* as they must juggle work and private lives (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016; Kidd, 2008; Mostert, 2009). Some are very good at keeping work issues separate from their household, as can be seen from the following statements:

> *I don't let my work and household overlap.* (PO1)
> *I don't want to discuss work issues at home, because then it is my whole day that is just about work.* (TO4)
> *So I rather take my rest day, without the money [overtime].* (TO5)

Others find it more difficult to separate the two. Some even confess to being workaholics, or to put in extra time at work. The interaction between a work context full of challenges, opportunities and rather ambitious persons results in the struggle to obtain balance, which may cause stress, ambiguity and dysfunctional coping behaviour (Löve et al., 2011). Accordingly, these include taking upon themselves more than they can handle and not giving priority to their health. They may also regard too much stress as acceptable. The following responses describe how work-life conflict may potentially move the self away from best-self:

> *We [women] are undermined a lot. We are held back a lot and many privileges [held back] if you are not really determined to do something or to*

be successful in a certain area in your career, then you will be held back. So you must fight harder than the normal male officer or male colleague, for example, would have done. (TO3)

It wasn't an easy job … but I enjoyed it and then I ended up being a tough woman and then … I went to [Division X] and I said I'm tired. Still in [Division X] there where only men and it was tough ... I'm a workaholic. Don't mind I will do even that job … just to go extra mile. (PO3)

It is actually very hard work and actually men's work. Especially pertaining to the hours, the shifts were too much, the standing, especially the roadblocks were too much. But I could cope still, until I had a child, became a mother, a wife. Then it did not fit in so nicely with the person I was at that stage. (TO3)

Even if I have to work late, I work until my work is done. I do not like work that is left undone, because it will bother me the whole night in any case that I can't sleep. (PO5)

Since most participants work shifts they have working hours that are not normative, so that they may not necessarily work eight hours from a set time in the morning to set time in the afternoon. They may work long hours and find these physically demanding (Arndt & Davis, 2011), for a working day may include overtime, standby and/or night work. As a result, officers may book off sick. Mostert (2009) stated that women need time at home to recover so as to reduce stress and fatigue from high job demands. Accordingly, their health seems to depend on their capacity to balance personal and work responsibilities, as reflected by these responses:

We are working a duty roster that is so tiring, it's so tiring, really. (TO1)

The shifts make you very tired because you don't get a lot of resting time…you get really exhausted and people book off sick as a result. (TO5)

Your body feels you need more time at home. (PO1)

You cannot really plan your life; you cannot plan your social life in a traffic officer occupation. (TO3)

Statements support findings by Chen (2015) as well as Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2017), who state that shift work and unusual working hours may impact well-being negatively. What one should strive for is a work-life balance for everybody (Lewis-

Enright et al., 2009), even though the very nature of the law enforcement environment may make it difficult to have a social life, or to manage various roles.

5.3.3.2 Multiple roles

Participants may fulfil *multiple roles* (Barnard, 2018), in addition to being police officers or traffic officers. These different roles demand flexibility (Mayer et al., 2018). Some may be wives, mothers or students and may have to attend to families as well. Franks et al. (2006) stated that the responsibilities associated with women's families may cause role overload as they try to build a career. For example, advancing in studies and/or being a mother while working are described here, and may not be easy:

> *As a wife, as a mother, as a police officer, I have to give him [husband] attention also.* (PO1)
> *Then I went back [to school], but while I was working. But, it wasn't easy.* (PO3)
> *I couldn't go on with my studies because of being a [position] on this side and being a mother on the other side.* (PO4)

Women who also fulfil the mother role may experience it as particularly hard not to be with their children and family due to work obligations. In line with Franks et al. (2006), women in this study may struggle to manage various life roles. In relation to their careers, they may be particularly afflicted by decision-making around family as also noted by Fassinger (2008) and by issues concerning raising their children (Sharf, 2010). When bringing together family and work roles women have additional emotional needs, while doing a great deal of extra emotional work in relation to others (Strazdins, 2000). Emotional work entails their attending to the needs of others, in order to improve the well-being of the family (Strazdins & Broom, 2004). Also, when children are involved some women's priorities may shift, even away from their job. The value attached to certain life roles may also change or shift, as reflected by the following statements:

I was sent on many courses and things, and when the children were still very little my husband did not like that very much … I realised the two things now overlap, and one must weigh up between your work and home what is more important to you. (PO1)

What made it more difficult … I worked every Christmas and it became too much for me because I am a mother, I want to be with my child, I want to be with my family. (TO3)

I didn't realise that, okay if I had to go and study further … I can empower myself … If I knew then that okay I was still young … But now I'm a mother of two, two children and I feel it [the job] is not for me anymore. (TO1)

Franks et al. (2006) explained that the time, energy and resources required to deal with multiple life roles, may create more and more related stress. If working hours keep participants from having work-life balance, they may decide to leave their job, or do something that will help them attain work opportunities during office hours. When choosing the latter, they might decide to continue with studies, but this may produce added stress while trying to finish their studies. Nonetheless, participants are more likely to persevere despite challenges (Roberts et al., 2005), if such studies or ways of empowerment constitute a movement toward best-self as well. However, for some the demands posed by multiple life roles may also involve considering to leave the profession totally. In instances such as these I infer they may have felt out of touch with themselves because their best selves longed to find expression in work roles other than law enforcement. Their related experiences were reflected through their stories as follows:

But like I say I really don't know what lies ahead for me. And I don't even see myself as stepping up another level in this current [job]. (TO1)

So that is what caused me to change … it is more in line with my personality, because I can serve the public now [in another, but related job]. (TO3)

And there I already decided I will definitely apply [for traffic officer] because in my mind I very much wanted to be a testing officer [eventually]. (TO2)

Let me know myself … where I want to see myself in future and let me know how to get there. Then I said, okay fine. Let me go back to school ... but while I was working. But it wasn't easy … I continue focusing. (PO3)

I now view all the potential agents for moving the self away from best-self in their totality. These reflect that well-being at work arises when individual characteristics interact with aspects of the organisational and working environment (Biggio & Cortese, 2013). All of these potential agents (i.e., challenges or stressors) may activate various responses within individuals (Fredrickson, 2001; Lazarus, 1993; Zukav, 2001), which have their own indispensable roles to play in developing authenticity.

5.4 THEME TWO: INDICATORS OF THE NEED TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY

In situating needs such as self-actualisation and our transpersonal quest for what we are a part of (Hiles, 2002), within Heidegger's modes of being, our related need is to adopt a mode of being that is authentic. Personality responses were regarded by participants as significant, as these indicate their need to develop authenticity or not. The subthemes constructed were *thoughts, emotions* and *behaviour*, as these are the important aspects of personality (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009), authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Moulard et al., 2016), coping and well-being (Cheng et al., 2014; Kidd, 2008). They serve as psychological indicators of the need to develop authenticity. These may be viewed as a guidance system toward authenticity, in which *out of self* and *into self* responses indicate whether one is moving away from or toward best-self respectively. Emotions involve feelings (LaMothe, 2010), which together with thoughts and behaviours have been shown to reflect a person's true self in most perspectives to authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Thoughts, feelings and actions about who self is, form pathways toward increased best-self, which also regenerates resources that help us develop toward best possible self (Roberts et al., 2005).

5.4.1 Subtheme: Thoughts

Thoughts reflect what participants think (or do not think) about themselves, people, situations or things. They think about their emotions, about the qualities they possess and about the influence of their behaviour on others. Historical interpretations present authenticity as the "union between thought and action"

(Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 293). Individuals' ability to recall a particular encounter together with the thoughts and actions they employed to cope, reflect the likelihood that they also thought or acted as described by them (Lazarus, 1993). Hence, some experiences of women reflect coping thoughts in particular, which involve the specific thoughts and actions employed by them to cope with a specific stressful experience (Lazarus, 1993). Their thoughts or ways of thinking are reflected through the following examples:

> *I think … it has a lot to do with the person you are and how you treat others.* (PO2)
>
> *I have a good sense of humour … sometimes when I sit and work becomes too much ... then I get up sometimes ... I talk to someone ... not over work stuff ... that's how I cope.* (PO5)
>
> *If I feel I was deprived of my rights … then I will first think about the situation because we are only human and our emotions can be such that we overreact.* (TO2)

Kernis (2003) described that thoughts are reflected in aspects linked to authenticity such as their self-esteem and values, through awareness of these. Roberts et al. (2005) link best-self to well-being by means of the increased occurrence of extraordinary thoughts about who self is when at its best. Hence, when participants have positive or affirmative thoughts about themselves, such thoughts indicate that their being is aligned with best-self. The following responses support this notion:

> *It is all about integrity, partnership, affirmation and perfect blending. Kenneth Blanchard said so.* (PO3)
>
> *I was born confident.* (PO4)
>
> *I personally have my own willpower and motivation on the inside and these play a very big role in helping me to be my best-self.* (TO2)
>
> *I am very honest … honesty and respect … caring, and I love people also.* (TO4)
>
> *I am a people person, I have a beautiful personality and I can communicate with people.* (TO6)

Conversely, when they have negative or destructive thoughts about themselves, these thoughts indicate that their being is not aligned with best-self. Since individuals' thoughts are also reflected by what they feel (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012), these thoughts may reflect negative emotions such as doubt, feelings of losing the self or not believing in oneself:

> *I don't see myself as a commander in a station. I think my personality will cause me not to be successful.* (PO1)
> *What I also realised, in traffic you almost like, your humanness must die to an extent ... as a woman you cannot do traffic work with your emotions, because then you won't [fine] anybody, then you're not going to do your work.* (TO3)
> *I don't think I can cope anymore.* (PO4)

It is not only thoughts about self that indicate to participants whether they are responding in a manner that moves them into self or out of self. Their thoughts or way of thinking about others and situations may also serve as mirrors of them being their best selves or not. For example, thoughts rooted in a positive emotion such as compassion can be the difference between responding in line with best-self or not. At the same time the experiences below demonstrate adaptive coping methods, in that the consequences of their thought responses move them back toward best-self and well-being:

> *Not everyone is mean. I can start my day so bad, but, I stop a motorist, talk to the person and you realise that you are not the only one who's going through something.* (TO1)
> *Because I get so angry ... then I rather go sit in my office and I think I should have said this or this. But then it is good I did not because then it is also something that could hurt someone's feelings, and I do not like that. I like to live in peace with everybody.* (PO5)

As described, when they interact their thoughts may be steered by emotions, while cognitions may be used to manage emotions as well (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Hence, the next subtheme constructed was that of emotions.

5.4.2 Subtheme: Emotions

The exploration into how women develop authenticity revealed that various *emotions* – both positive and negative – are involved. Lehman et al. (2018) also relate authenticity to emotions. Emotion is energy in motion, which conveys intense feelings about thoughts and includes moods (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). The mind regulates how information and energy flow inside people and between them, through emotion and thought, during our actions and interactions with each other (Siegel, 2012). If the participant revealed a positive emotion it means that the person, in the experience described, elected not to act from a possible emotion that is negative, and vice versa. Participant experiences reflect the possibilities of both positive and negative emotions (tables 5.2 and 5.3) and the continuous dynamic between these, as both are part of being human:

> *Even if I'm unhappy some days, then I just say thank you that I have a job.* (TO5)
>
> *You have to be happy at home, you have to be happy at work. But it doesn't happen 100% of the time.* (TO1)
>
> *It's a pleasure for me to help somebody, it's just the people with whom you work … the people's attitude that really puts you down.* (PO1)

Authenticity is associated with positive emotions (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Wood et al., 2008), which include feelings (LaMothe, 2010). As with thoughts, best-self is linked to well-being by means of the increased occurrence of extraordinary feelings about who self is at its best (Roberts et al., 2005). Zukav (2001) views emotions as intentions, speaking of intentions of love or intentions of fear – conscious choices through which corresponding outcomes will manifest. Accordingly, intentions of love and fear are associated with authentic and inauthentic living respectively, while one's need to love and to be loved represent authentic needs. Positive emotions revealed by women in this study included love, happiness or joy, compassion, thankfulness, patience, forgiveness, optimism, confidence, hopefulness, respect and humility (table 5.2). Within a spiritual context, love may be given special importance (Sisk, 2016), by regarding other positive emotions (e.g., patience and kindness) as characteristics or expressions of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-

8; Fry, 2003). Cook and Geldenhuys (2018) found that love is the primary motivator for individuals to give back, while sparking other qualities such as compassion, generosity, hope, and joy.

These positive emotions are discussed further (in the order of table 5.2) within the context of this study. Love involves passion, caring for others and having empathy (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018). I elaborate on this emotion in Chapter Six under section 6.2.1 and through figure 6.4. Next, happiness is viewed as the energy employed to realise one's optimal potential (May, 2009; Strümpfer, 2006). Seligman states authentic happiness involves positive emotions, results from the identification of one's primary strengths and using these in work and life, since employing our valued virtues and strengths brings about well-being (Huang, 2008; Seligman, 2004). Aristotle's view is that true happiness resides in doing things that are worth doing (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and involves personal expressiveness toward self-actualisation (Waterman, 1993). Authentic happiness has individual and organisational outcomes such as subjective well-being and organisational commitment (Swart & Rothmann, 2012). Joy involves happiness, as well as feelings of complete peace, warm content, and just feels good (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018). Costello (2015) speaks of joy and takes it beyond self by linking it to spiritual happiness.

In line with *beyond self* aspects, Walsh and Vaughan (1993) describe compassion as a mental factor involved in transpersonal development. Compassion is a mindfulness quality (Kabat-Zinn, 2012), involving genuine caring for people, while wanting to share with and attend to the needs of the less fortunate (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018). Thankfulness is another mindfulness quality (Kabat-Zinn, 2012), which involves appreciation and gratitude for what has happened and a feeling of goodwill (Strümpfer, 2006). Also associated with mindfulness is patience (Kabat-Zinn, 2012), a personal resource (Park, 2013) necessary for spiritual transformation (Barton, 2009) that is associated with virtues such as love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Fry, 2003). Zukav (2001) opines that emotions such as love and forgiveness underpin authentic power. He describes forgiveness as an energy dynamic of pardoning wrongdoings and not holding others responsible, but being accountable for your own experience. Accordingly, forgiveness enables abandoning

critical judgment of self and others, while letting go of hurt and negative experiences so that one lightens up.

The ability to lighten up brings to mind Peterson's (2000) description of a good mood in relation to optimism. Accordingly, optimism involves emotional, cognitive and motivational aspects, and having good expectations about the future. Optimism or hopefulness is associated with coping and well-being (Karademas, 2006; Lazarus, 1993). Optimism is also associated with achievement, perseverance and physical health (Peterson, 2000). Individuals believe and hope that things will get better, while optimism is further shaped by being lovable and feeling capable (Karademas, 2006). Feeling capable links to the next emotion of confidence in that self-confidence denotes the belief or trust in oneself and being certain of your own abilities (Coetzee & Roythorne Jacobs, 2012). Self-confidence and authenticity interact since self-confidence brings about authentic self-expression (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014), while authenticity links to one's beliefs of self within the work context (Brown, 2015). Belief further relates to hope, which means believing that one is capable of doing more and making a difference in the future, no matter the circumstances (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018).

The next emotion is humility – the ability to accurately assess one's own characteristics by acknowledging your limitations and setting aside the self (Tangney, 2009). Humility is a power from within that is not demonstrated by causing harm, but by feeling contentment when one's authentic needs are fulfilled; while not being burdened by having to live up to standards that are not authentic (Zukav, 2001). Accordingly, humility does not mean that individuals are not proud of things they can do well, or that they do not aim to do their best; they are just not attracted to representations of external power and do not compete for such power. Humility increases patience and forgiveness (Tangney, 2009), enhances self-transcendence and strengthens the relationship with the Sacred (Lavelock et al., 2014).

Positive emotions may be viewed as *into self* responses (table 5.2), indicating that a person's being is already aligned with best-self. Emotions were explicitly articulated during interviews or inferred from participants' description of experiences.

Table 5.2: Positive emotions – *into self* responses

Emotion	***Supporting experiences***
Love	*I also love talking to people very very much.* (PO6) *I fell in love with the career of being a traffic officer.* (TO2) *I also love people very much.* (TO4)
Happiness	*I am happy, happy to be a policewoman.* (PO1) *I'm happy [at work].* (TO5)
Joy	*It wasn't an easy job … but I enjoyed it.* (PO3) *I enjoyed my work tremendously.* (TO2)
Compassion	*Sometimes when you're doing your job you feel emotional because you think that these people don't have anything at home.* (PO4) *I feel it with the person.* (TO4)
Thankfulness	*And one must actually be thankful to the Lord.* (PO1) *Can't help but look at them and say thank you God.* (TO1)
Patience	*I have that patience to listen to people.* (PO2) *It was a long battle … and eventually, they sent me away.* (TO2) *It took a bit long, but everything happens for a reason.* (TO6)
Forgiveness	*I forgive quickly.* (PO4) *I said, you are forgiven.* (TO1*)* *Then I apologised … and they apologised.* (TO6)
Optimism	*In a bad situation there is always something good also.* (PO2) *If I am tired God will give me the strength.* (TO1*)*
Confidence	*I was born confident.* (PO4) *I have a lot of self-confidence.* (PO6) *Even if I sit among managers or people with high occupations, I don't have to feel inferior because I know who I am.* (TO3)
Hope	*But I hope I will get there one day.* (PO2) *And know I've got hope. Just keep your faith.* (PO3) *I hope and trust … we as women will stand up for ourselves.* (TO2)
Humility	*I do not like showing off when you are in uniform.* (PO1) *I will be the lesser one and rather stand back, or say I'm sorry so that we can move forward.* (TO2) *That which I don't know, I ask how to do it and so on.* (TO6)

I recall Lazarus' (1993) belief that the process of coping is specifically linked to the type of emotion felt in an adaptational situation and to the conditions that activated such emotions. We are unique in our being, also in terms of where we are at along our journey toward developing authenticity. Hence, participants may respond with different emotions to similar potential agents in the authenticity dynamic. People may regularly experience and demonstrate emotion in response to thoughts or events (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). Reisenzein (2008) posits that primary mechanisms of emotion involve monitoring the significance of cognised experiences

on the individual's motives or needs, communicating the changes sensed in other subsystems of personality and suggesting action objectives. Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) associated inauthenticity with negative emotions. Ariza-Montes et al. (2017) state that not being authentic gives rise to anxiety as well as psychopathologies. Our modes of being are distinguishable as authentic or inauthentic (Dewar, 2016; Heidegger 1953/1996), while positive and negative emotions may be viewed as expressions of either love or fear respectively (Zukav, 2001). Hence, I infer that, in relation to best-self, the need to develop authenticity arises when the emotions activated within are negative, meaning not in line with best-self. Negative emotions as revealed in this study included unhappiness, frustration, fear, doubt, anger, jealousy and anxiety (table 5.3). These may be viewed as *out of self* responses, indicating that the participant's being is not aligned with best-self. Negative emotions may be viewed as stress emotions (Lazarus, 1993) or destructive emotions (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993).

Hence, if the need to be authentic is not met as reflected by their emotional responses that cause them to move out of self, participants experience negative emotions. However, Reisenzein (2008) posits that the emotional effects on thoughts and actions are not inevitable, and persons may choose to obey or disregard promptings from their emotions and regulate their own emotions. Participants' negative emotions therefore may drive or motivate them to change to satisfy the need to become authentic. Lazarus (1991) states that emotion is followed by coping, which in turn shapes emotions.

Experiencing the negative results associated with negative emotions teaches one to create something different, by employing positive emotions instead (Zukav, 2001). Accordingly, one can consider the consequences of both positive and negative emotions, in advance before living them, and determine if expressing the negative emotion that one feels is worth it in terms of the inherent consequences. It is then within their ability to adopt a way of being that is authentic, by changing how they respond in terms of their thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

Table 5.3: Negative emotions – *out of self* responses

Emotion	***Supporting experiences***
Unhappiness	*It's only a few things that sometimes make you unhappy.* (PO1) *You were unhappy over something that happened earlier.* (TO2) *And now you are already unhappy.* (TO3)
Frustration	*So, that is very frustrating to me.* (PO6) *You get so frustrated because already you must work on a Sunday, and you're a mother.* (TO3)
Fear	*Many times we are afraid of the unknown. (PO2)* *I started to get scared [because of the position]. (PO4)*
Doubt	*When the promotion came I wondered if I will be able to do it. (PO2)* *When I just started I felt it was the wrong decision. (TO2)* *So now I don't know what … the future holds. (TO5)*
Anger	*You become angry because the people don't learn.* (PO1) *Sometimes when I get angry, but it rarely happens.* (PO5)
Jealousy	*Because with us people tend to be jealous.* (PO4) *Jealousy is an ugly thing.* (TO6)
Anxiety	*Is she gonna be productive at work worrying about her mother?* (TO1) *Then I said okay fine don't worry [to the self].* (PO3) *I was very nervous … exposed to the public, drunk people.* (TO2)

5.4.3 Subtheme: Behaviour

When moving into best-self, participants are able to recognise and describe the connection between behaviour or actions and consequences – the understanding of which they associated with developing authenticity. By connecting behaviour to the consequences they are likely to experience in return (Husserl, 1936/1970), they are able not to behave in similar manners when others behave negatively toward them. To them, their behavioural responses toward others and the related energies they ultimately contribute to their worlds, depend on their own behaviour regardless of the behaviour of others:

> *Now the thing is a person cannot repay evil with evil.* (PO1)
>
> *Because what you're doing today to a person will be done to you one day.* (PO4)
>
> *When you do something for another person you feel good yourself*. (TO1)

Their behaviour also reveals what they do (or do not do) to cope, for coping comprises the behavioural and cognitive efforts employed by individuals to handle psychological stress (Lazarus, 1993). For example, they employ behaviour as coping responses by considering the negative consequences of their own behaviour in advance (Zukav, 2001). Accordingly, doing so presents them with opportunities to choose different behaviour to those that are likely to bring about negative outcomes. Observable behavioural responses reflect internal states and processes of thoughts and emotions that we cannot observe directly (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2011). Related experiences are reflected by these excerpts:

> *Some colleagues are in conflict with everybody … I totally avoid conflict with that person because I know I will not win.* (TO2)
> *But then it is good I did not [say something] because then it is also something that could have hurt someone's feelings.* (PO5)

Hence, how they cope is particularly reflected by the interconnectedness between the three subthemes of thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Interactions are understood through emotions (Copp, 2008) that link their inner world of mind to their interpersonal world (Siegel, 2012). Hence, their emotions influence behaviour (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009) and vice versa, while how they think about situations also influences how they respond (or do not respond) to situations or people. Their way of thinking is reflected also by their values that enable them to behave in line with best-self, as opposed to changing because of their situation. Participants further described coping behaviour or actions they employ to cope with stressful situations (Lazarus, 1993). In the first experience (below) the participant regards her initial method of coping – controlled by emotions and resulting in behaving "tough" toward another – as not being in line with her best-self. The participant is aware of this fact, and at the same time she uses her experience of not coping in the best possible way, to remind her to employ a different behavioural coping response in the future. Hence, it is not necessarily a matter of avoiding a situation because it can potentially make one feel less authentic, as Schmader and Sedikides (2018) also note. It is about learning how to respond differently the next time around, since Cheng et al. (2014) found that avoidance as a coping strategy is associated with poorer well-being. In the second experience the behavioural coping response chosen by the

participant is aligned with best-self as reflected by the maintained attitude of persevering, staying the course and sticking to one's values, regardless of external stressors:

> *Where not being my best-self almost got me into trouble, when my emotions controlled me a bit, I was a bit tough with a motorist ... I am glad it happened to me so I can prevent it in the future, because it can cause big trouble if a person does things when your emotions overwhelm you.* (TO6)
>
> *Some of the people don't accept you. And they will do things to see to it that you fall. But, even if you fall, you have to stand up and brush yourself off and look forward again. You can change, the police, this organisation can change your behaviour easily. But if you have those strong values that I talk about, then you will survive in this organisation.* (PO4)

With thoughts also influencing emotions (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012), participants may alter and manage their feelings by altering the thought underpinning the emotion. These in turn may then influence coping behaviour. Hence, in their experiences the interplay between emotions, cognitions and behaviour further unfolded as follows:

> *If I feel I was deprived of my rights … then I will first think about the situation, because we are only human and our emotions can be such that we overreact … then I begin to consider my options on how I am to handle this conflict situation.* (TO2)
>
> *My philosophy is never dwell on something that is done, it does not help and makes you sick. Deal with it and move on. It's something I taught myself when I had true personal problems. Must say it made me a much happier person.* (PO2)

Positive responses represent a pathway that is aligned with developing authenticity. Such responses are associated with the best-self characteristics in the theme to follow. Fredrickson (2001) proposed the *broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions* that illustrates the interconnectedness between emotions, thoughts, and what people do. This theory provides a valuable perspective on positive emotions

within the context of the current study. Accordingly, the momentary thought-action options or choices (i.e., mind-sets) of people are broadened when they experience positive emotions. This broadening of alternatives in turn builds people's enduring personal resources, which according to Fredrickson (2001) include social, physical, intellectual and psychological resources. Negative emotions, on the other hand, are associated with tendencies to consider fewer things on what to do, since the thought-action options are narrowed (Strümpfer, 2006). Negative responses represent a pathway that is not leading to developing authenticity, so that best-self characteristics cannot unfold or be revealed. In this case, participants find that they need to turn back toward best-self, which involves realigning self.

5.5 THEME THREE: REALIGNING SELF WITH BEST-SELF CHARACTERISTICS

Showing your best-self allows others to see your true self more clearly (Human et al., 2012) – thus revealing authentic self. "Best" denotes the talents, strengths and contributions that individuals bring with them (Roberts et al., 2005). Women in this study described best-self characteristics as both indicators and outcomes of authentic self. Hence, these characteristics are what participants need to feel that they are developing authenticity, but they are also the outcomes of living life authentically. Roberts et al. (2005) link best-self to well-being by means of the increased occurrence of extraordinary thoughts, actions and feelings about who self is at its best. Accordingly, these are pathways toward increased best-self, which also regenerate resources that enable us to advance along our journey of developing toward best possible self. Since all possibilities already exist as modes of being to adopt, I am already that which I am becoming, while actual *being* is a matter of choosing to reveal it to others (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Best-self may be viewed in relation to positive self-presentation – an adaptive style of interaction – while retaining authenticity within fairly stress-free situations (Human et al., 2012). Best-self involves feelings of personal expressiveness (Roberts et al., 2005; Waterman, 1993) and a state of well-being comprising feelings, which indicate that one is alive with passion and authenticity (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Ariza-Montes et al. (2017) also link feelings of authenticity to well-being. Activities that result in such feelings are to

be found in experiences in which self-realisation takes place (Waterman, 1993). Accordingly, things are done in which individuals fulfil their personal potentials through developing talents and skills, and by living life according to their purposes in it.

Participant experiences revealed the following subthemes pertaining to realigning self with best-self characteristics: *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics; reconnecting to a higher power; returning to a more optimistic orientation to life; making a meaningful contribution;* and *practising responsible self-expression*. Most of these also produced subcategories, which are presented where of relevance.

5.5.1 Subtheme: Becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics

Women revealed that it is important to become mindful of self-other difference dynamics if they are to develop their authenticity. Essentially, they learn to understand themselves and then others as suggested by Cranton and Carusetta (2004). Heidegger explained how existential truth is made known when people try to understand each other, while also opening up themselves to be understood (DuBose, 2010a). This subtheme produced the following subcategories: *gaining insight into intra- and interpersonal processes; dealing with emotional demands posed to self; and choosing mindful living over a mindless one.*

5.5.1.1 Gaining insight into intra- and interpersonal processes

Kernis (2003) offers a view of authenticity that focusses on the importance of self-understanding in adjustment and well-being. Developing authenticity entails that women in this study are learning to first become mindful of, and understand, their own personalities. Therefore, the process or dynamic starts from within:

> *So I always say people must start working on themselves.* (PO1)
> *I first had to get to know myself as my personality, who I am, and then things fell into place.* (PO2)
> *I've got strong personality character.* (PO3)

Participants also revealed discovering the polarities that exist within their personalities such as being soft-hearted, while also having an "other side" as a possibility, or being less assertive, but learning to become more assertive. Participants know, or come to know, the array of qualities that determine their habitual ways of responding to situations (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011). Understanding personality comes from exploring their reactions and interactions (Moerdyk, 2009). It involves recognising and acknowledging which mode of being is activated within them by someone, something or circumstances – in terms of thoughts, emotions, behaviour and attitudes as well. This awareness sheds light on all the enduring patterns of behaviour and characteristics that distinguish how they think, feel and act (Bergh, 2009a). They come to understand themselves as a result of exploring all parts of their personality and getting to know the person as a whole (Theron, 2009). Participants' related experiences were conveyed through the following responses:

> *I am actually too soft-hearted, sometimes, but if they just push me far enough then they get my other side, which I don't bring out often.* (PO5)
>
> *It [personal struggles] gave me much more of a voice … because I never knew I could be like that … the person I was before in the police was very different, softer, did not like conflict.* (PO2)

In coming to understand the polarities within their personalities, individuals acquire insight into their personality preferences, associated characteristics and the effects of such preferences on their choices of work environment and on work adjustment (Sharf, 2010). They gain clarity on aspects such as self-concept, values (Schlegel et al., 2009), and come to know the views they hold of their abilities and personal characteristics (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Schmader and Sedikides (2018) relate self-concept, as experienced when there is congruence between one's environment and valued self-aspects, to experiences of true self – a significant aspect of authenticity. As a result, participants are very clear on what they enjoy doing. Now they see how their personality is meant to operate and express itself in the world of work as well:

> *I am a people's person, I like to talk … it fits in with what I am, who I am … I*

enjoyed communicating with people. (PO2)

I fell in love with the occupation of a traffic officer and I enjoyed my work tremendously. (TO2)

Developing authenticity enables them to discover who they are within the work context and in life. This ability reflects the notion of work identity as described by Adams and Crafford (2012), and supports the suggestion by Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) that authenticity aspects might be of significance in work identity. They discover not only how, but also why they respond as they do. For example, sometimes the work environment can change a person's behaviour, or the job itself may bring about an externally derived identity and worth, so that one forgets who you truly are. Hence, for participants, who they are in the work context is a matter of understanding who they have always been:

The reason for the job, which made me feel important or that was my identity – I later realised with time – it was actually a lie, that is not who I am … I cannot only feel important when I'm in my work. (TO3)

You can change, the police, this organisation can change your behaviour easily. But if you have those strong values that I talk about, then you will survive in this organisation. (PO4)

Maybe it's because I kept to myself as a child, and when people began to use profanities around me then I withdrew … I don't get involved in conflict and stuff and avoid it rather. (TO5)

Understanding of their own personality enables women in this study to then understand others better as well. Human beings mirror each other, enabling others to reveal themselves and to be understood (Benner, 2008). Hence, it is their interactions with others that enable them to make sense of experiences (Vannini, 2008), but because they have learnt to understand themselves first. We are connected most notably by our minds that emerge from the regulatory roles taking place within our nervous system, from our relationships with others and creation – when we share energy and information or communicate with each other (Siegel, 2012). I can identify with women's experiences and I can see that we need others to better understand ourselves as well as them:

What I also realise is, you get different personalities … people with backgrounds, different cultures, and those play a big role in people's view in conflict situations, how they handle conflict. (TO2)

I understand their [transgressors'] point also. (TO5)

I just realised one day ... she is also a human being, maybe she has her own issues that causes her to be the way she is. (PO1)

Hence, understanding personality dynamics is necessary to help a person to determine what authentic personality entails (Wood et al., 2008), and to understand how we use personality aspects to respond to, or cope in the world (Kernis, 2003; Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). Such understanding is also necessary to help us uncover what our personality characteristics have to offer to particular work environments (Sharf, 2010). However, even if we were to find the "most ideal" work environment in which to give expression to self, our interactions with others will keep on mirroring our developmental areas in relation to authenticity – for developing authenticity is part of our life's journey. When this happens, we need to inner-act and interact in emotionally intelligent ways, to ensure that the personality characteristics we express are in line with the outcomes of authentic being we want to experience in our lives.

5.5.1.2 Dealing with emotional demands posed to self

Authenticity demands great emotional intelligence (McGrath, 2013). Emotional intelligence involves individuals' ability to use perception, integration, understanding and reflectivity to handle their own and others' emotions (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Emotional intelligence is reflected by being able to use intuition to employ compassion, to develop personal and professional relationships (McGrath, 2013). Participants display emotional awareness in that they are aware of the activated emotion as feeling good or feeling bad (Russell, 2003); but also in relation to the possibilities of emotion with which one then decides to react (or not react):

When you go from home to work in a good mood, then there's always someone or something, which … gets you down … then you must mingle with positive people again. (PO1)

If I feel I was deprived of my rights … then I will first think about the situation, because we are only human and our emotions can be such that we overreact. (TO2)

I'm happy in my way, I try each day even when some people upset me … I avoid them. (TO5)

Being a component of authenticity, emotional awareness (Zukav, 2000) through the emotional intelligence component of self-awareness (McGrath, 2013), is necessary for well-being (Zukav, 2001). Awareness of destructive emotions, as opposed to supressing them, is an important element in eventually transforming them (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). Participants also have the awareness or understanding that emotions that feel bad, such as experiencing sadness, do not represent being one's best-self:

If I'm sad or there is something that is not making me happy, I'm not gonna perform my best-self … it all depends actually on the person, how you choose to react to everything. (TO1)

I started to get scared … I said … I will get over it. (PO4)

If you make me unhappy then I will tell you so clearly. (PO6)

Women in this study are also able to place themselves in another's shoes. Hence, they have empathy and sympathy – abilities associated with emotional intelligence, which in turn makes it possible to be one's true self (McGrath, 2013). Participants are able to imagine what and how others may think, feel and how they may be affected by a situation. What they convey also amounts to emotional work, which involves their actions of caring for others, engaging with people emotionally (Strazdins & Broom, 2004), the ability to deal with the emotions of others, and building social relationships that are positive and cooperative (Strazdins, 2000). They consider persons and their special circumstances to understand them better, what they are going through and why people may behave as they do. Hence, dealing with the emotional demands posed to self requires observing others more accurately (Yadav & Punia, 2016). In line with Kilcup (2016), participants do so by coming to understand the viewpoints and motives of others:

Crime is a very difficult issue in South Africa. You've got poverty, on the other side. Then now we expect people to behave, but people are hungry … they want to have something as you're having something. (PO4)

I feel so bad I feel it could have been me … and where must they [beggars] go to? They are also trying to get an income. (TO5)

[Police station] was really where I could express myself in my career by working with people, by building relationships, and my passion was working with people. (PO1)

As long as … they know where to draw the line, you can have a good working relationship with your people … we are like friends but they know, and I think that approach causes them to have more respect for me. (PO2)

Suzuki (2010a) explains the ability to have a mind of compassion, which enables us to be true to who we are and to have sympathy for all beings. Some participants revealed having compassion as including the ability to place themselves on another's level of awareness. During this study, becoming more aware of the fact that I can place myself on another's level of awareness has enhanced my ability to truly place myself in another's shoes. For me, it serves as a means of gaining more control over my emotional responses to others. Participants shared the following experiences in this regard:

The specific person, at that stage, was not aware that it was someone out to con them … but so we school the people and teach them. (PO1)

Because … what is important to you is not important to them. (PO2)

And then I hear, actually also with a sympathetic ear that, the person is actually not that informed. (PO6)

And the members of the public they tend to back up their [angry] drivers … not knowing you are there to protect them … Now members of the public are not aware of those things [road safety issues]. (TO1)

Hence, individual experiences reflect their abilities to manage the self and relationships as well as self-awareness – all reflective of emotional intelligence and valuable in developing authenticity (McGrath, 2013). Their experiences also reflect a mode of being in which they show care and concern when they engage with others

and the world (Dewar, 2016), illustrating their ability to employ intentionality (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Cranton and Carusetta (2004) also defined authenticity in terms of self-awareness and using this skill to understand, care for and to have better relationships with others. Women in this study learn to employ the power of the mind (Siegel, 2012) to become fully involved with the environment, which allows for the revelation of true self to others (Carson & Langer, 2006).

5.5.1.3 Choosing mindful living over a mindless one

Mindfulness is associated with authentic living (Carson & Langer, 2006) and contextually, another skill that contributes to emotional intelligence (McGrath, 2013). Certain participant characteristics were identified that in line with literature, are indicators of people's ability to employ mindfulness in their work environment and to life in general. I group women's contributions into mindfulness attitudes, qualities and skills, although aspects may overlap in literature. I incorporate examples of how these manifested in the experiences of the women. Being an emotional intelligence factor, supportive experiences to mindfulness may reside also in previous subthemes as referenced in text.

Mindfulness attitudes included *learning from experiences* (Carson & Langer, 2006). Participants learn from everyday occurrences and learn how to handle and adjust to situations over time. Included lessons related to independence, decision-making, recalling coping methods that were useful in previous experiences, as well as how not to handle situations:

> *Each time that you encounter a situation, a different situation, then you really learn how to handle it.* (PO2)
> *But as time goes on then we learned to adjust.* (PO4)
> *There you learn to stand on you own feet and to make decisions.* (PO5)
> *That experience also helped me to handle it better today because I learned from the previous experience I had*. (TO2)

Participants also described how the attitude of *patience* (Kabat-Zinn, 2012) enables them to be tolerant, to take time to listen to others and to stay the course (see

Subtheme: Emotions under *Theme Two: Indicators of the need to develop authenticity).* Bonthuys et al. (2017) found that listening before one responds links to mindfulness and enhanced objectivity, since one is more open-minded. Another attitude was *letting go* (Baer et al., 2008; Suzuki 2010a). It allows them to move on and therefore to cope better as well. In my life when I am able to let go, I find it easier not to expect of others to change as a condition for my well-being. Also, I am able not to mindlessly allow the negative energies of others to dictate my course and way of being. Participants employ a mind-set that enables them to free themselves from physical, relational as well as from emotional attachments and events, when doing so is in their best interest (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). Therefore, I ponder some more on the attitude reflected in the statement by TO4 below. Her context suggests that she is very caring and loving toward people. Hence, her experience is interpreted as one of letting go as opposed to not caring, so as to manage the negative effects a person or event may have on her being:

> *So then I forget already about what had happened because I do not want to make that person's problem my own.* (TO4)
> *You deal with a thing and you get over it and you leave it there … so you move forward but it also shapes you.* (PO2)
> *All my friends decided to leave me. Then I said no it's fine that's a good thing. Then I continued focusing.* (PO3)

Mindfulness qualities revealed by women were *thankfulness*, *forgiveness* and *compassion* (Kabat-Zinn, 2012). Participants are thankful for being kept from harm, for people and for things in their lives. *Forgiveness* in participants transpired also and they are able to pardon ill treatment from others. They revealed *compassion*, which is a mental factor that stems from and strengthens ethical behaviour during transpersonal development (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). As an aspect of well-being, compassion is employed to integrate mind, brain and relationships (Siegel, 2012). It reflects how participants have care, concern, empathy and understanding for others and their feelings. The subtheme of *Emotions* under Theme Two (*Indicators of the need to develop authenticity*) contains the participant experiences (see table 5.2) that support these mindfulness qualities as well.

Mindfulness skills relate to “non-reactivity to inner experiences” (Baer et al., 2008, p. 330). Accordingly, persons are able to experience their thoughts and emotions as they come and go, while not being ruled by them. Participants do not allow their external environment, life’s challenges, or negative emotions to keep on affecting them negatively. As noted also by Suzuki (2010a) in relation to mindful individuals, they are able to let the images in their minds be, without being bothered by them:

> *Many people feel negative toward their work. I’m different, even though I feel so today I will still try to make your day better for you.* (PO1)
> *Storms will come and storms will go … for me I don’t see any problem.* (PO3)
> *I don’t know how I was able also to carry on like this as if nothing happened and [as if] it was normal.* (TO1)
> *Sometimes I feel a bit withdrawn but I try not to let them get me down.* (TO6)

Participants also revealed the mindfulness skill of *observing*, which means noticing stimuli in their internal and external worlds, including physical sensations, sensory information, emotions and cognitions (Baer et al., 2008). This skill may seem trivial, but being present and open to such stimuli can provide insight along the path to developing authenticity. They pay attention to things such as changes within the organisation, to memories, to feelings, but also to how the physical body reacts to challenges or stressors:

> *Most of my frustrations are more the organisational things itself, because there is constant change to which you must get used to.* (PO2)
> *Maybe you attended a suicide … it’s not easy … because somewhere in your mind you will remember.* (PO6)
> *You already have your own guilt about not being at home.* (TO3)
> *It is hurt … it is sadness, it’s a lot of things, which one must deal with.* (TO4)
> *I was very nervous … you are exposed to the public, drunk people.* (TO2)
> *I became scared, it’s when I developed the ulcer.* (PO3)

The skill of *describing* also transpired and refers to their ability to express thoughts, emotions, perceptions, stimuli and experiences as words (Baer et al., 2004). When participants express things it helps them to understand experiences and to get

feelings and thoughts out, so as to deal with it:

> *It feels to me that I haven't actually really meant something to someone today.* (PO1)
> *Look I am a relatively happy person.* (PO5)
> *I feel you're not listening to what I'm saying.* (TO1)
> *Sometimes you can feel so down.* (TO6)

There were those who revealed the skill of "accepting without judgement" (Baer et al., 2004, p. 194). This skill involved allowing a person or situation to be, without evaluating or trying to change these. When participants do so, their experiences may also show how their ways of reasoning, thinking about, or seeing things enable them to apply this skill:

> *I also realised one day that she is also a human being, maybe she has her own issues that cause her to be the way she is.* (PO1)
> *But if it does not happen it's fine. (*PO5)
> *I accept that people will sometimes feel threatened because you are hardworking.* (TO2)
> *Even though it is begging, it's not … do you know how low you have to sink to beg?* (TO5)

Viewing this subtheme of *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics* again in its totality, its subcategories reflect the skills of personality insight, emotional intelligence and mindfulness. When you are not being authentic you may allow others to manipulate you mindlessly (Carson & Langer, 2006; Zukav, 2001) into what to think, feel and do. My journey of developing authenticity teaches me that, when I live mindlessly I am not aware of how my thoughts, emotions and behaviour influence each other. I may forget that I have the ability to choose these regardless of the challenges and stressors that come my way. I forget where my power comes from and I cling to perspectives that I am used to. Mindfulness facilitates an understanding that, with regard to one's own behaviour, multiple perspectives exist from which to choose (Carson & Langer, 2006). One such perspective may be that our experiences occur within its broadest potential context (Hiles, 2002) and that we

are part of something bigger than the self.

5.5.2 Subtheme: Reconnecting to a higher power

Participants revealed how realigning self with best-self involves reconnecting to a higher power. In keeping with Hiles (2002), explorations into authentic human existence are bound to produce aspects of a spiritual nature. Participants referred to their higher power as Almighty, Creator, Lord, Father, God and/or Jesus. The women who participated appeared to all be mostly from a Christian religion and therefore the data speak of God and Christ. This aspect brings to mind how individuals may view God as “Ultimate Being” (Kilcup, 2016, p. 248), which agrees with best-self in a spiritual way. However, there is a difference between spirituality and religion (Karakas, 2010), and I do not claim that reconnecting to a higher power only includes a Christian perspective. Hence, I give evidence of what may be considered as basic spiritual needs, which provide moral guidance and a sense of self that is spiritually grounded.

Moral behaviour does link to authenticity, also in the place of work (Zhang et al., 2018). This extends the opportunity to develop authenticity by means of the intended framework to individuals with other religious thinking about a divine higher power, as well as to those not claiming any religion at all. I acknowledge being a Christian and that realigning myself with God caused me to strongly identify with the religious culture of the women in this study. Therefore, I speak from a Christian perspective, but I acknowledge the more general application possibility of spirituality. In the course of this study I anticipated that I would encounter the Sacred – a necessary intention if one is to truly understand topics of a spiritual and transpersonal nature (Anderson, 2015).

This subtheme produced the following subcategories: *having awareness of the presence of a higher power, viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective* and *tapping into a source of strength and energy.*

5.5.2.1 Having awareness of the presence of a higher power

Participants describe being aware that a higher power is present in their lives (Fry, 2003), which paves the way for them reconnecting with it. Correspondingly, Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2017) found that traffic officers experienced the influence of a higher power and connected to this source in their world of work, as a means of coping with challenges or stressors. Vaughan (2002) states that awareness of spirit as foundational to being or creation amounts to spiritual intelligence, which develops as we gain a deeper understanding of spirit, mind, body, soul, matter and life. Accordingly, spiritual intelligence concerns mind and spirit, in relation to being in the world. Spiritual intelligence includes self-awareness (Kilcup, 2016), but extends it to include awareness of one's relationship with the transcendent, others, the earth and with all beings (Vaughan, 2002). Although awareness of the presence of a higher power is something that participants feel within, they speak of this presence as if it is a physical one that is with them:

> *Sometimes the Lord places a person in places or between people.* (PO1)
> *In everything I do I know Almighty is there.* (PO4)
> *You know the Lord is the one who keeps a person going.* (PO5)
> *God has always been there for me … through it all.* (TO1)
> *I have the Lord in my life.* (TO2)

I can relate to feeling this presence in daily life, and more so when in dire danger. I was in a serious motor vehicle accident once while on duty, and its nature was such that I felt, in that moment, death was inevitable. I was in the vehicle alone and all I remember is calling out the name of Jesus. It felt as though I was within a bubble inside of the vehicle, the whole time for the duration of the accident. The vehicle was a write-off, but I did not lose one drop of blood and fortunately no one else was injured on the road. Such experiences align with the transpersonal aspect of our beings, according to which the meaning of "human" includes a person's connection with the divine or higher parts of themselves and of the world they live in (Spaeth, 2010). Spiritual experiences not only facilitate awareness of spirit that contributes to psychological well-being (Vaughan, 2002). It also strengthens one's identification with God (Poll & Smith, 2003).

5.5.2.2 Viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective

When developing authenticity participants come to view their best selves from a spiritual identity perspective. This identity provides inner worth, allows them to reconsider their motives for being in an occupation and to recognise the connectedness of self with other people and their higher power. Extraordinary facets of individuals and their world (Spaeth, 2010) relate to the human being's sacred internal dimension (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Gleig, 2010). Participants' sense of spiritual identity is developed through experiences with God and by noticing their own and others' divinity (Poll & Smith, 2003). Accordingly, spiritual identity as a concept only has merit when individuals believe that God exists and that they have a spiritual nature. Toward a general application, each person may determine for him or herself what the original source is within which their efforts are rooted (Suzuki, 2010b). Notwithstanding, participants identify with God and based on how they refer to Him and their conveyed spiritual convictions, I make certain assumptions about their spirituality. I assume they believe to be created in God's likeness and image (Genesis 1:26), for as described also by Welzen (2011), their narratives reflect the influence of biblical spirituality:

> *I believe in our Creator God, who made heaven and earth, and the human originated from Him. Nothing exists that did not originate from Him.* (PO6)
> *The Lord number one ... contributed greatly to my persevering ... and when I reached a point where I discovered who I really was ... I don't need a title to feel worthy ... because if I were to lose my job that time when my identity was in [being] a traffic officer ... I would have lost my life, because it was my life. So, it's important to know why you are in this occupation and what your motives are.* (TO3)

Adopting this likeness involves the ability to choose (Bros, 2009), but individuals must accept responsibility for their choices (Sisk, 2016; Spaeth, 2010), because actions have corresponding consequences (Fleeson & Wilt, 2010; Husserl, 1936/1970; Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017). For example, in the experiences below, doing for others has a corresponding consequence of feeling good, while caring for others is believed to attract the favour of the Lord so that life is perceived as going

well. These are evident in participants' consideration of karmic effects as alluded to by Cook & Geldenhuys (2018), and views on how they should react or not, to others' actions:

> *Now the thing is a person cannot repay evil with evil.* (PO1)
> *Because what you're doing today to a person will be done to you one day.* (PO4)
> *Because when you do something for another person you feel good yourself*. (TO1)
> *One of my colleagues told me do you know that you are in the favour of the Lord ... do you realise how well it is going with you because you are a good person, you always care about others.* (TO6)

Acknowledging the reality of the soul (Poll & Smith, 2003), I further assume that, because participants believe they are created in His likeness, they are motivated by the deep-seated need to be like God (Ephesians 4: 22-24). By his very nature God *is* love (Howard, 2009; Jacobs, 2013). Individuals who share this belief will then aspire to be loving also (Poll & Smith, 2003). The capacity to develop mental equilibrium and therefore to maintain such emotions as love, even under pressure, corresponds to Christian, but also to Buddhist, Hindu and Taoist principles (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). Hence, the needs of the soul are applicable, and what it needs to be healthy are things such as love, forgiveness, humility and clarity (Zukav, 2001). These needs correspond with the positive or *into self* emotions identified in Theme Two. I posit that – in relation to any human being's best-self – such needs may be regarded as spiritual needs, even for those not identifying with a higher power of God. Similarly, spirituality and spiritual needs relate to belief systems involved in universal quests for meaning and purpose, regardless of religion or no religion (Murray, Kendall & Benton, 2004). In addition, spiritual identity is considered by William James in his early work as a central part of personality (Poll & Smith, 2003), and spirituality relates to specific behaviours, attitudes and emotional states of individuals (Tischler, Biberman & McKeage, 2002). The spiritual aspects contribute to the standard of self, as formed by best-self characteristics, in relation to developing authenticity. In participants' experiences such standards are reflected by

their values and beliefs, which may be derived from scriptural guidelines, their spiritual background and relationship with God:

> *That is why as an individual you can't speak out of anger or out of … yes we've got contracts binding us, job descriptions binding us, but what does God say? What does the Bible say? What do the Ten Commandments say?* (TO1)
>
> *I will also link it [best-self] very strongly to my spiritual background, the fact that I am very spiritual and have the Lord in my life, because I have spiritual values.* (TO2)
>
> *And because I grew up in a family that believe, that have strong values and beliefs ... And I'm a believer. In everything I do I know Almighty is there.* (PO4)

Nonetheless, for participants in this study, given human's sinful nature (Howard, 2009), there is this constant struggle between God's will and their will (Barton, 2009). By implication there is conflict between authentic and inauthentic needs – between needing to be one's best-self and impulses not to be. Since participants describe that responding in ways contrary to best-self bring out the ugly in them and make them snap, such responses may be regarded as maladaptive coping. Ryan et al. (2005) also linked inauthenticity to disadvantageous or maladaptive behaviour and an inability to cope. I assert that the need to develop authenticity arises when our personality responses to people or events do not satisfy (align with) the needs of the soul, so that the soul is not well. Things like frustration, despair, losing control and relationship problems are signs of spiritual needs, while signs of well-being include harmony, inner peace, coping with emotions and finding meaning (Murray et al., 2004). When participants mirror the image of God in activity and function (Clines, 1986), or in coming to think, feel and act like Jesus (Howard, 2009), they act in line with best-self since they associate best-self also with their spiritual identity. When they do not mirror the image of God they disconnect from their higher power (Barton, 2009), acting contrary to best-self:

> *When you deal with difficult people who causes you to forget who you are, that brings out the ugly in you, is when I am no longer my best-self.* (PO2)

When I am myself is when I am positive … because when you are not yourself you snap. (TO6)

'Because I get so angry that I don't actually know what I must say, then I walk away … and I do not like that, I like to live in peace with everybody. (PO5)

And I pray a lot for my temper … and dear Jesus must help me with that. *I can see that I have changed a bit, not a bit, I have changed.* (TO6)

Women in this study then need to restore their "image" and make themselves new through Christ (Noland, 2009), who elevated love for God and others as the overall description and ultimate example of being (Wilhoit, 2009). This information reminds one of Heidegger's notion that our being is to take care of and have concern for things (Dewar, 2016). Moreland (1998) speaks of renewal during which God brings new abilities of the spirit to life – potentialities that may not have been used or actualised – that are to be developed by us in order for these to grow:

I also love people very much. But when I find out you have disappointed me … I talk to God … I say Lord … I am not like that. Take it away so we can go on. (TO4)

I'm very talkative and I'm very confrontational ... I had to go through all of those things [challenges] in order for me to realise that okay, now I'm sitting still, now I can gather my thoughts, God talk to me, show me where I went wrong, show me where what I can do to better myself. (TO1)

The model for the development of spiritual identity presented by Poll and Smith (2003) assumes the reality that we communicate with God through our spirits. Similarly, Clines (1986) stated that, where "image" denotes similarity to God, such identification is naturally expected to occur by means of someone's spirit or that part shared with God. Viewing authenticity from a spiritual identity perspective enables participants to realign self with the characteristics and values of their higher power, by tapping into it as authentic source.

5.5.2.3 Tapping into a source of strength and energy

Women on their authentic journeys could trace their source of strength and energy

back to themselves, or within themselves, but bestowed upon them by a higher power. They feel that they need their higher power, especially given the nature of their work, as reflected by the challenges or stressors constructed in Theme One. Authenticity in itself may be viewed as a basic human strength (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), so that an understanding of where such strength originates from (Strümpfer, 2006) may shed light on a person's well-being (Theron, 2009). Individuals have been found to relate to their spiritual source or higher power (Kiesling et al., 2006), and to extract personal resources that allow them to handle stressors in their work environments (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017). Especially, when situations occur as presented by people or their environment over which they have no control, they can put their trust in something they regard more powerful than themselves. They connect to a higher or divine power, but concurrently need to relate to others, so as to transcend self (Poll & Smith, 2003). Recalling that emotion is energy in motion (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012) exchanged during interactions, their experiences show how they associate their higher power with helping them to deal with emotions of self and others:

> *More especially if you are in this kind of work where you [life] are on the line, even if you are not doing this kind of work, we need God. That is why as an individual you can't speak out of anger ... there's so much that we can learn from one another.* (TO1)
>
> *I'm a believer, I get my strength from God ... because with us people tend to be jealous ... they will look like they are with you but you'll find out afterwards that these people they were confusing you.* (PO4)

Some participants expressed accessing or connecting with their higher power by attending church and/or reading the Bible. Most of them connected with their higher power by praying or talking to it (Kilcup, 2016). This facet supports literature describing how individuals may use prayer to derive help and strength from their spiritual source in times of need (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017; Mohan & Uys, 2006). When they pray they employ qualities such as hopefulness, thankfulness, having faith and belief. Contextually, prayer has been found to enhance forgiveness and compassion in some situations (Levine, Aviv, Yoo, Ewing & Au, 2009), thereby affecting positive emotions. Tapping into to their higher power while having such

attitudes seem to be a way of coping with challenges or stressors. In this manner they access the internal resources they need, such as strength and wisdom to handle problems:

> *The extra time I go to church … My strength comes from my God.* (PO3)
> *If someone loves wine … you will manage your problems with wine. If you love praying you will manage your problems with prayer.* (PO6)
> *The Lord is the one who keeps a person going. One goes at night and prays and then tomorrow you feel alright again and then you go on again.* (PO5)
> *Because for me I had to acknowledge God as my Saviour, I had to say God I need you. I had to pray and really take time to pray, talk to God, ask for strength ask for wisdom and all those things.* (TO1)
> *Most of the things are strength from above … I say thank you every day that He gives me strength to get through the day.* (TO5)

It has been established that positive emotions are associated with authenticity (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014), coping (Fredrickson, 2001) and well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Therefore, it follows that any person is capable of tapping "directly" into emotions associated with best-self (see Theme Two) for the purpose of developing authenticity, not just people believing in a higher power.

Nonetheless, one participant shared having an extraordinary experience once, while tapping into her source of energy and strength through prayer. In her case, reassurance and replenishment of her personal resources were accompanied by her having a vision of herself with her higher power. Tischler et al. (2002) stated that being spiritual entails having a personal experience of the Transcendent, the Sacred, the Beyond, of God, or of Allah. Thus, with which parts of their being do participants connect with the energy of their higher power? I consider Moreland's (1998, p. 35) explanations of soul – "a substantial, unified reality that informs its body", being present throughout the body and "soul and body relate to each other in a cause-effect way". These qualities of the soul remind me of Siegel's (2012) definition of the mind. However, Moreland (1998) regards mind and spirit as faculties of the soul, with mind comprising thoughts, beliefs and abilities, while spirit is that faculty through which we relate to God. Moreland (1998) states that the self *is* the

soul and posits that particular aspects of generally accepted perspectives about the self, appear to need a considerable soul so as to even make sense. Shared in my (R) experience (see Chapter One, section 1.2.4) with the officers, and in particular with the one who had the vision (TO1), is the fact that our preceding experiences were such that we reached a point of surrender. We surrendered ourselves completely, not to the situation or challenge, but to our higher power. Doing so requires tremendous trust, but what one derives from connecting are things such as love, trust, wholeness and strength in return:

> *I had to be so strong all the time so much that it took only that one accident scene, to crack everything ... I prayed I prayed I prayed I prayed and it was so much [intense] that I got a vision of Jesus, it was like God was holding my hand and I was this little child … it was like Christ was saying to me I've always been there, you just forgot about me for a moment and somehow I had to remind you that you still need Me … That is how I got out of there. I got out of there as a whole person.* (TO1)
>
> *Then I felt as though my feet lifted from the ground … I felt light – as if I was levitating. I fell backward … It was a sublime state – peaceful; a state of tremendous love and trust; a state in which I felt that, no matter what, everything will work out fine.* (R)
>
> *I firmly believe that a person can do nothing on his own strength and that God brings things on your path and with it the necessary strength to get through it … and of cause my trust in my Creator – the key to everything.* (PO2)

I infer that connection to one's authentic source occurs by means of the highest parts of being – with the soul. However, before this study I have not thought of my soul and my spirit as *distinct*, often using these terms interchangeably. The only way I can make sense of Moreland's (1998) conceptualisation of soul for myself is to consider the names participants have for their higher power. Given that I identify with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, what comes to mind is the Trinity of God, as influenced by my religious background. If I then consider my "self" in the mirror (Noland, 2009) of The Trinity of God (Habets, 2003), this phenomenon allows me to understand Moreland's (1998) explanation of my being or self *as* soul, comprising mind, body and spirit. What seems to illuminate the mind and link the personal and

transpersonal aspects, as well as self with spirit, is the spiritual intelligence concept (Vaughan, 2002) that transpired earlier. Spiritual intelligence results in enhancement of the quality of one's work experience (Arsang-Jang et al., 2017). Abilities associated with our spiritual experiences, such as the capacities to transcend and to enter higher states of consciousness (Emmons, 2009; Valverde, 2016), are beneficial to our mental health (Giannone & Kaplin, 2017). The capacities invoked as described according to Emmons (2009) are beneficial coping methods in and of itself. For example, transcendental awareness is likely to create the perception of security that serves as a way of coping in crisis, should material resources lack or prove inadequate (King & DeCicco, 2009). Even when we feel negative, we must acknowledge such feelings, but also be cognisant of the positive side – that a spiritual force is purposefully at work in our lives (Murray et al., 2004; Zukav, 2001).

5.5.3 Subtheme: Returning to a more optimistic orientation to life

Women in this study return to a more optimistic orientation to life, as part of the process of realigning self with best-self. Optimism may be viewed as a cognitive feature but also has emotional characteristics, in that related beliefs involve future events about which a person has intense feelings (Peterson, 2000). Previously, it was established that authentic living is brought about by practising mindfulness. A consequence of mindfulness is that participants are able to make a choice with each situation to view things, even mistakes, from a positive perspective, no matter what life brings their way (Carson & Langer, 2006). Under this subtheme two subcategories were developed namely, *adopting a positive way of being* and *envisioning a best possible life story.*

5.5.3.1 Adopting a positive way of being

Through being more positive women feel more authentic. They are typically optimistic, hopeful and confident (see table 5.2: *Positive emotions*), qualities considered important when developing authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Accordingly, these qualities are brought about when individuals believe in themselves. Such qualities are positive psychological capital, which enables individuals to adjust better to conditions and to cooperate with others (Toor & Ofori,

2010). Participants tend to focus on positive aspects in work and life. They try to make the best of a situation, motivating themselves, remaining focussed, and even anticipating that things will be fine. Some women maintain this positive orientation by employing positive self-talk. In line with Diener et al. (2008), well-being is determined by how positively (or not) people experience life:

> *I always try to be positive … irrespective, because I always tell myself I am not here [at work] the entire day, let me do the best for the 12 hours that I am here.* (PO1)
>
> *I was born confident. I decide, I sit down and tell myself that … they're not gonna destroy me. Never!* (PO4)
>
> *Today I'm gonna wake up and say, devil you're not gonna get the better of me.* (TO1)

Hence, they associated best-self with an emotion or mood that feels good. This aspect contradicts literature positing that positive emotions may in some instances be regarded as distressing, such as love that is not reciprocated (Lazarus, 2000). In relation to the previous subtheme, I posit that participants' experiences of positive emotions as feeling good is very much a result of them viewing these in relation to their spiritual identity in a higher divine power (in the context of this study, connecting to Godly and biblical descriptions of love). Further, the first subtheme (under this core theme) revealed that they learn to become mindful of self-other difference dynamics, so that they learn how to cope with emotional difficulties posed to self. Therefore, participants come to learn that it is not the positive emotion such as love that hurts, but a person's response to an unreciprocated love that may cause such hurt (see Theme Two, subtheme: *Emotions*). Although life will inevitably present challenges that can diminish our optimism, it is important to believe that such challenges can eventually be overcome (Peterson, 2000). Optimism or hopefulness is associated with coping and well-being (Karademas, 2006; Lazarus, 1993). In this way participants are motivated to persevere and to do what is necessary to return to best-self, because they know that returning to best-self means the return to positive moods and feelings as well:

In a bad situation there is always something good also to be seen. (PO2) *And know I've got hope. Just keep your faith … I'm ready for it. I will never have gone through the storm and then after that I don't get good results, no.* (PO3)

Their positive orientation helps them to realign with the best-self in the present and also directs them in terms of what they want to see manifest in their future. Cultivating optimism is beneficial since positive expectations may play a self-fulfilling role (Peterson, 2000), so that what they project into the future in terms of authentic living may then manifest as desired.

5.5.3.2 Envisioning a best possible life story

Women envision best possible life stories of what they would like to see manifest by means of thoughts, setting intentions and through visualisation. Doing so may enhance their optimism and well-being, as they imagine a best possible self (Meevissen, Peters & Alberts, 2011). Their possibilities reflect what they aspire to and may be informed by the dreams that others have for them. This aspect aligns with the notion of Heidegger (1953/1996) that people's interactions with others have an effect on the projections they make of themselves, in relation to possibilities in the future. Possibilities may be triggered by images or experiences – past or present. Therefore, I consider the themes resulting from their past, so as to understand what is experienced in the present and to recognise what they envision for their future (Thrift & Amundson, 2007). Their interactions, projections and the influencing factors that have been passed down to them are revealed in their discourse (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Hence, participants conveyed the following experiences:

Always wanted to get into a uniform[ed] position because I grew up in a uniform environment [family]. (TO5)
[Name] showed me a photo one day of [police woman] at a college and told me she would really like me to become a police woman as well. (PO1)

However, to manifest their authentic selves, individuals must adopt possibilities for themselves that come from within, as opposed to the possibilities others have for them (Heidegger, 1953/1996; Koydemir et al., 2018; Kreber et al., 2007). The

motivation behind behaviour must be self-determined, in order for an action to be authentic and for well-being to prevail (Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018). In relation to careers, for example, I interpret "self-determined" to mean that individuals' aspirations must be rooted in their own dreams and not based on the desires that a mother, a father, or anyone else may have for them. Glavas (2016) describes this quality as doing work that is true to self. Further, adopting a particular career because someone else thinks it is a good idea, may mean ending up in job roles you do not like and that do not match your unique skills, talents and abilities. One may find yourself pursuing and ultimately living someone else's dreams – not those of your authentic self:

> *My father was also an ex-cop but I did not like the police, it was only my father who loved to see me being a police official.* (PO3)
> *I never thought actually at first I would be a traffic officer … My mom saw the advert in the [newspaper] … so I tried it.* (TO1)
> *My first choice was not really a police woman; it was social worker … maybe because my father was in the police?* (PO2)

Truly identifying with their job roles helps women in this study to feel more authentic. I compare in particular TO5's experience next, to the one shared by her at the start of this subcategory: her family was in law enforcement so she ended up in law enforcement. However, below she feels *very happy* and *like herself* on the occasions when she is required to do testing officer duties. One can infer that she therefore feels more like her best-self as a testing officer and less so when doing traffic officer duties. Envisioning a best possible life story occurs in relation to career goals and to self, or life goals in general. For example, they expect to overcome challenges or that things will turn out for the better:

> *I was like myself there [as testing officer] and I was very happy … I like to talk and I make people feel at ease.* (TO5)
> *So, it is important to know why you are in this career and what your motives are for sitting here … [I] concentrate on my own life and my own goals for myself, which I want to achieve in my life.* (TO3)
> *I said leave me there ... I will get over it [referring to a challenge].* (PO4)

God, you gave me the greatest day today and it's gonna be like that again tomorrow. (TO1)

Participants create or construct a mental pathway to their intended outcome of developing authenticity (Roberts et al., 2005), so that they know what it feels like to be living their best possibility, or how to get there when they are not. Doing so contributes to experiencing a more optimistic orientation to life, even in the face of challenges. This orientation in turn enhances their well-being (Meevissen, Peters & Alberts, 2011), and along this pathway they also discover the unique ways in which they were meant to contribute to the world.

5.5.4 Subtheme: Making a meaningful contribution

Realignment with best-self characteristics further involves *making a meaningful contribution.* Meaningful activities have a motivational influence on individuals' work behaviour (Taris & Van den Bosch, 2018) while enhancing performance (Connelly & Turel, 2016; Lyubovnikova et al., 2017). As a result, some participants do more than what is expected of them and even look forward to work. This quality is reflective of optimal functioning and psychological well-being, which are associated with authentic experiences (Zhang et al., 2018). Authentic behaviour includes acting according to their preferences (Kernis, 2003), while meaning in their work derives precisely from what they like or prefer doing. Preferences may include working with and talking to people, helping them and making others happy. Hence, they find what they are meant to do in their unique characteristics, talents and abilities – in what brings joy to their being when doing it. Finding meaning is indicative of spiritual well-being also (Murray et al., 2004). Their potentialities have always been within them (Hiles, 2002), but in a relational space these indicate what they are meant to give back in the form of service to others (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017; Bros, 2009). Hence, it is giving the best of themselves to others that makes them feel good in work and life:

And you looked forward to going [to work], because when you do something for another person you feel good yourself. (TO1)

When I am happy and I am at work, then I do my best, it's as if you go that extra mile. (TO6)

I enjoyed my work tremendously. (TO2)

Such experiences remind me of spiritual *joy* (Costello, 2015) and how it constantly signals that actions are aligned with true self (Norton, 1976). Spirituality provides meaning to life (Arsang-Jang et al., 2017), while contributing to increased enthusiasm and connectedness at work (Van der Walt, 2018). In the law enforcement career, spiritual meaning is the belief system that work roles have significant consequences for other's well-being in a meaning making way, and that one is part of a bigger whole, tasked to ensure wellness in others and the community (Arndt & Davis, 2011). Hence, participants' experiences also reflect spiritual intelligence since higher consciousness allows them to determine what is important in their lives and what they were meant to contribute to the world (Sisk, 2016). The personal characteristics of veracity and charity are characteristic of *spiritual intelligence* (that transpired with *reconnecting to a higher power: viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective*), but may also be referred to as authenticity and the willingness to be of service to others respectively (Vaughan, 2002). Accordingly, mind and spirit (inner life) connect with behaviours and service to others (outer life) by means of spiritual maturity, as an expression of spiritual intelligence. There is a joyful expression of distinctive qualities when interacting with one's environment (Amundson et al., 2009; Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012), as reflected by the following excerpts:

If I assist people and people are happy about what I've done for them then I feel I've done something; you know? (PO4)

I could help people better … and the community in that instance. (PO6)

I fell in love with the occupation of a traffic officer and I enjoyed my work tremendously. (TO2)

I am a people's person, I like to talk … it fits in with what I am, who I am … I enjoyed communicating with people. (PO2)

Hence, finding talents and abilities are not enough; it is also necessary to have ways of applying these to attain goals with personal meaning (Waterman et al., 2010).

One can make a meaningful contribution in many ways, but is it rooted in doing things that are truly meaningful to your own self? Are you living according to the purpose, value and goals unique to your being? In relation to careers one may ask if meaningful contributions are made, within the context of an occupational setting that requires what your unique being has to offer. Are your primary career needs being met (Barnard, 2018; Coetzee, 2018)? This question is significant since finding meaning, purpose and worth also transpired as universal spiritual needs earlier (Murray et al., 2004). Making a meaningful contribution to participants resides in doing something of personal significance for which they have a passion (De Crom & Rothmann, 2018), in which they truly care about their jobs and the people they serve. This subtheme reflects the manifestation of *envisioning a best possible life story*, and likewise experiences may reflect the consequences of doing things that are not aligned with the needs of own self. Not having a passion for an occupation may lead to not caring about being absent from work. Also, when individuals are not provided the opportunity to give expression to what they love to do in the world of work, they may experience not feeling good and not being of optimal value. Avolio and Gardner (2005) explained how authenticity influences well-being and sustainable performance. Likewise, in these instances, participant experiences show that their well-being and their performance are affected negatively:

> *Somebody who is in a job and who does not love that job is actually more of a waste for the company and for himself, because … I don't care to stay out, I don't care to be sick, because I don't have the passion for the occupation I am in.* (TO3)
>
> *There I felt like a clerk … I did not feel like a police woman anymore … it was so monotonous that I later developed half of a depression there … where I am now I'm very happy.* (PO5)
>
> *[Police station] was really where I could express myself in my career by working with people, by building relationships, and my passion was working with people.* (PO1)

Feelings associated with being able to express themselves and employing such behaviours to self-actualise and provide meaning to life, are indicative of well-being (Waterman et al., 2010), which is connected to authenticity (Ariza-Montes et al.,

2017; Wood et al., 2008). When individuals do what is truly meaningful to them (De Crom & Rothmann, 2018; Waterman et al., 2008), their eudaimonic well-being may be enhanced despite challenges (Bauer et al., 2008). Accordingly, they acquire the ability to view challenging experiences in a transformative way, in which they learn new life lessons and gain new insights into self and others. Part of these new understandings is that expressions of self also come with responsibility, as do all that we do along our developing authenticity.

5.5.5 Subtheme: Practising responsible self-expression

Practising responsible self-expression came to light in that participants control or adapt how they express themselves. Further, being human includes taking responsibility for responses regarding emotions, perceptions, choices and behaviours (Johnson, 2008). For example, sometimes they are more dominant and straight forward, but other times they are less dominant or more light-hearted, given the situation:

> *To make them understand you are in control … it's easier if you are straight to the point with people.* (PO2)
> *Sometimes you have to beg and bite your tongue [giggle].* (PO2)
> *I don't allow men to dominate me at work just like that.* (TO6)
> *So here I will have to lie low, I will have to admit I was wrong.* (TO6)

Either way, they act with awareness of possible consequences of the manner of self-expression adopted. Findings contradict Barnard and Simbhoo (2014) who found that public service managers mainly associated experiences of authenticity with congruent self-expression, such as demonstrating consistent behavioural styles. Accordingly, related experiences were associated with being able to act according to favoured personality styles. However, Savickas et al. (2009) posits that rapid environmental changes call for human adaptability and continuous learning, regardless of how constant individual traits might be. Correspondingly, Fleeson and Wilt (2010) found that people regularly vary behaviour to act contrary to traits or character and that moving away from your trait level do not diminish authenticity. Similar to Fleeson and Wilt (2010), it is what a person does and the consequences

of certain ways of behaving that are experienced as more authentic, regardless of the person's preferred trait:

> *I say what I want to at that stage but also not everything that I want to … But then it is good I did not because then it is also something that could have hurt someone's feelings.* (PO5)
> *I like to chat a lot ... and outside on the road you cannot be like that, now you rather have to be a bit strict and you cannot joke here and there ... because then people sometimes take it seriously.* (TO5)

Hence, different or opposite reactions of persons to situations should not necessarily be interpreted as inauthenticity (Fleeson & Wilt, 2010). In the context of these women's work duties, this notion makes sense, as an expression may sometimes be dictated or influenced by laws, rules and regulations – in which case obtaining compliance from others may require a firmer stance. Other expressions may just form part of informal or everyday interactions but, even then, the context influences the nature of responses. Hence, as described by Fleeson and Wilt (2010), flexible behaviour may sometimes indicate enhanced authenticity and appears to be characteristically genuine:

> *Because I'm in uniform that does not give me the right to speak and treat everyone the way I wish, talk to a person like whatever I feel.* (TO1)
> *We can sit in a meeting and I raise my voice, I talk.* (TO1)
> *I will be the lesser one and rather stand back, or say I'm sorry so that we can move forward.* (TO2)
> *You must stand up for yourself … you must have a very strong character.* (TO2)

This theme described ways in which participants may realign the self with best-self characteristics, when they develop authenticity. From the data these characteristics seem to be developed by means of an ongoing process, as interpreted next.

5.6 INTEGRATIVE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE THREE MAIN THEMES

Women in law enforcement are presented with challenges or stressors in their world of work. These relate to interpersonal differences and conflict potential, their work context and work-life imbalance. Within their work context they must deal with the inherently conflictual nature of the job and work environment, an organisational climate of distrust and a gendered organisational culture. The work-life imbalance results from work-life conflict and the multiple roles they have to fulfil. These challenges or stressors serve as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self in the authenticity dynamic. Thus, when these demands are posed to individuals, they may also activate within them personality responses expressed as thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Such responses already represent coping, and also manifest as indicators of the need to develop authenticity. If responses are in line with best-self, they will have one moving into self. In this case, *being* is authentic. If responses are not in line with best-self, they will have one moving out of self. In this case *being* is not authentic hence, the need for adaptive coping and as a consequence, the need for developing authenticity. Authenticity is developed by realigning self with best-self characteristics (Theme Three). Best-self characteristics involve becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics, reconnecting to a higher power, returning to a more optimistic orientation to life, making a meaningful contribution and practising responsible self-expression.

5.7 REFLECTION

Initially, the core themes and its content did not “look” as presented here. At first my thematic analysis reflected a summary or organisation of data in a mostly descriptive way. This occurrence is a typical development in interpretive thematic analysis (Anderson, 2004). I will not say there was no interpretation initially, but less so, for data analysis in qualitative research commences the instant researchers acquire knowledge that affects the way they interpret data (Morgan, 2008). To produce the best possible interpretations (Kafle, 2011), I had to challenge my analytic skills and transform my way of thinking about my own and participant experiences. My supervisor also constructively challenged and encouraged my development in these regards. As I spent more time with the data, it was the hermeneutic circle of

interpretation that allowed me to make sense of data. It was not only a matter of moving back and forth between component parts and the whole of the phenomenon (Kelly, 2006c). I also often had to “leave” the data and return to it later, allowing time for connections and insights to come to me. The final format of findings was a product of much modification and rearrangement of themes and its parts until, as directed by Chen (2007), it made the most practical sense in relation to relevant literature and participant experiences.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter Five described the findings that resulted from the thematic data analysis and predominantly, from a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective. Three main themes were constructed from the data through integrative analysis of the verbatim text with relevant metatheoretical understandings. The chapter was concluded with an integrative summary of the three main themes, their subthemes and relevant subcategories – indicating conceptually my understanding of how they relate in a meaningful manner. Chapter Six follows in which the framework is advanced on developing authenticity.

CHAPTER SIX
SYNTHESISING THE FINDINGS AND PERSONAL TRANSFORMATIONS – DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Six advances the framework for developing authenticity. Chapter Five highlighted the influence of the hermeneutic phenomenological approach in deriving meaning from the data through thematic analysis. Although the transpersonal approach had continuous influence throughout this study, the equally significant role that it played during the interpretation of data especially comes to the fore in this chapter. My own developing authenticity was influenced in profound ways by considering related literature while engaging in self-reflection and the process of reflexivity, and by the insights gained while analysing data of self and participants (Anderson, 2006). In this chapter, I therefore first present conceptual insights about the personal transformation, which resulted from my continued reflection on the themes in Chapter Five and my evolving metatheoretical understanding. I then formulate action steps for developing authenticity through the conceptual integration of those themes with my self-reflections. This is followed by contextualisation of the process of developing authenticity. I then present the framework for developing authenticity, which I ultimately propose in this thesis. As part of my reflection I critically review the proposed framework by also applying it to myself, after which I conclude this chapter.

6.2 PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

Developing a theoretical framework required a conceptual synthesis driven by further critical reflection on the three core themes constructed in the previous chapter. An underlying process of transformation became clear from this reflection, as I developed pertinent conceptual insights through applying the three themes to my experience and understanding of my authenticity development. In life we can tell someone to be positive, but not everyone may know how, even though that is what they may want. Similarly, we all might aspire to being authentic, but our lifelong challenge resides in figuring out how to get there (or how to have it unfold).

Therefore, to figure out what the themes derived from the data analysis said about how to develop authenticity, I had to accept the challenge is to commit to doing the required authenticity work. In this section I especially use my personal transformation as data (Anderson, 2015). I first provide examples of how I have been transformed by the broadening of my presuppositions, to develop conceptual insights about the process of how to develop authenticity. I secondly apply Themes One to Three (from Chapter Five) to myself – a 42-year-old married woman of colour – to come to understand authenticity work as an ongoing process dynamic. By doing self-reflection against the three themes I move closer toward developing the ultimate framework.

6.2.1 The broadening of presuppositions: authenticity as an ongoing process dynamic

Interpretations during data analysis were influenced by my presuppositions (Davidsen, 2013) and their development or broadening as my research journey progressed. Positive human growth is a facet of authenticity and beneficial to well-being (Koydemir et al., 2018). I provide four examples to demonstrate my evolving understanding of authenticity as an ongoing process dynamic and the need to do authenticity work, to develop our sense of being best-self. I refer back to these later as *realisations* (first to fourth):

Firstly, I have come to know that it is our thought, emotional and behavioural responses (Theme Two) that interact to show the need for and pave the way toward best-self. These responses shape how we experience our need to develop authenticity (figure 6.1), by serving as *out of self* or *into self* responses, which indicate the need to return to best-self or not. Viewing my negative emotions, thoughts and behaviour as valuable indicators of the need to move toward authenticity is also imperative to personal transformation; as opposed to succumb to or dwell in emotions and thoughts of despair and viewing them as meaningless. As explained by Suzuki (2010b), conflict results when we have a one-sided or fixed view. Hence, a profound insight gained relates to why conflict arises within me in relation to developing authenticity. When I am not being my best-self, I entertain only

the perspective(s) of my being as its untransformed personality (equates “one side”), while I fail to consider the perspective(s) of my being as its authentic self. When I hold a one-sided view, internal conflict is experienced in that the needs of my untransformed personality compete with the needs of my best and authentic self. If I then accept that my best-self needs multiple perspectives, then conflict arises between me and another also externally, when I cling to only *my way* of seeing things. In this regard I have come to hear my own inner voice more clearly and my awareness of my inauthenticity sets in more quickly. When I am not considering the differing views of others, my entire being informs me – through my resulting unsettled thoughts and emotions – that I am not behaving in line with best-self.

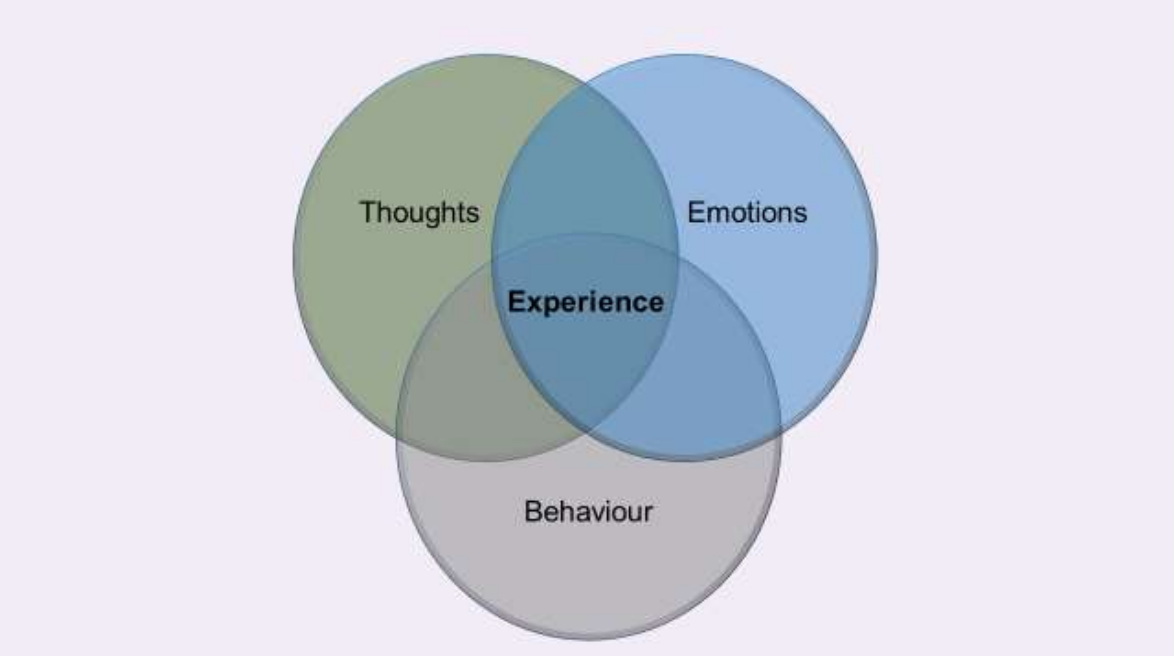


Figure 6.1: Thoughts, emotions and behaviour shape the authenticity experience.

Secondly, I summarise how I broadened specific presuppositions (table 6.1) with which I entered the study, as presented in Chapter Three (section 3.2.1.3, here in left column). In the right column I summatively describe how my conceptual insights have expanded hitherto:

Table 6.1: Personal transformation – broadening of presuppositions

Presuppositions with which I entered the study	Seeing my presuppositions expanding throughout the study
Each person holds an internal subjective reality of what it means to become authentic or to develop authenticity. When we evaluate such subjective reality only against the characteristics of our own personality as is in the moment, our perceptions around how to develop authenticity may remain merely subjective.	Abiding by such a subjective reality has initially led me to think that I can say what I want, respond as I want, to exercise my preferences, regardless of consequence or effect, because "this is how I am". However, such an attitude may stand in the way of all that I can be in terms of best-self. This lesson I have learnt by identifying with unsettling thoughts and emotions as suggesting *out of self* responses (see Theme Two). I have come to this realisation during data analysis and while reflecting on the data.
The characteristics we associate with being authentic are already present in us and in the universe as existential possibilities, if we so choose, to make them part of (or to make them more dominant parts of) our personalities.	In daily interactions our minds are constantly exchanging energy and knowledge, which affect our thoughts, emotions, physical body and behaviour – all of which indicate whether we are in an authentic or inauthentic mode of being (Theme Two). The need for developing authenticity occurs in a relational context when how the self responds, to others and events, is not in line with best-self. It requires that we do authenticity work as set into motion by internal and external stimuli.
These characteristics of authenticity represent a "standard" for developing authenticity, with its origin in something "outside" or "beyond" the self, but of which we have always been part (whether we were aware of this connection or not).	The best-self characteristics constructed (see Theme Three) amount to authentic being. I can identify with these and now believe that they reflect authenticity. They also form the standards against which developing authenticity is evaluated. Standards are rooted in the quality of our thoughts, emotions and behaviour toward the self and toward others, and are inspired by something spiritual as well. We are responsible for the quality of the energy we contribute to self, to others and the world.
Herein lies the more sceptic or more objective perspective, as we evaluate that which we want to become – on our journey toward developing authenticity – against standards "outside" of the "current" self.	I can no longer hide behind such notions as "this is how I am", knowing that the best possibilities of my being – that may include less preferred personality styles – have not even been given a chance to reveal itself yet. If anything is not revealed, I am blocking it myself, keeping it from being able to unfold. Developing authenticity denotes returning to self, and more accurately entails realigning personality responses with best-self characteristics. If a stimulus activates within me inauthentic reactions, or impulses to be inauthentic, realignment entails choosing to rather respond with best-self characteristics.

Thirdly, I make a slight adjustment to the integrative conceptualisation adopted for authenticity (Chapter Two, section 2.6; Chapter Five, figure 5.1), because I have come to see developing authenticity within the context of the bigger or beyond-self picture. As noted in table 6.1 above, *being* is rooted in the quality of thoughts, emotions and behaviour toward self, but also toward others and the world we live in. This *being* includes a spiritual orientation and best-self characteristics that speak of intrapersonal insight, mindfulness, spiritual identity, optimistic life orientation, meaningful contribution and practising responsible self-expression (see Theme Three). Authenticity as an unfolding process dynamic is depicted in figure 6.3 and reflects a personal transformation process of doing authenticity work or developing authenticity. Based on the findings and my analytic reflections, I now view authenticity as in figure 6.2. The term "alignment" proposed in the initial conceptual understanding of authenticity, is substituted with "realignment" – also as inspired by Heidegger (1953/2010), Padgett (2007), Roberts et al. (2005), and Suzuki (2010b). This realignment process involves intentionally employing the best-self characteristics to guide adaptive responses and to manifest corresponding consequences such as well-being.

Authenticity is an individual difference construct formed by an ongoing process of the realignment of personality aspects of thoughts, emotions and behaviour with best-self. Developing authenticity involves developing best-self characteristics, associated skills and applying these to guide adaptive responses and manifest corresponding consequences, such as positive coping and enhanced well-being.

Figure 6.2: Defining authenticity and developing authenticity.

In the figure 6.3 below, from left to right, the left brace represents **being**. This **being** includes **authentic self** and **personality** – of which the left braces connect, since they are part of one greater whole. Authentic self, equates **best-self** that is represented by the blue right block arrow. **Personality** includes thoughts, emotions and behaviour, represented by the blue curved down arrow. Its arrow originates in that of the best-self arrow, to illustrate that we already have within us the possibility of being authentic. The arrows illustrating best-self and personality also represent the **process nature** of developing authenticity.

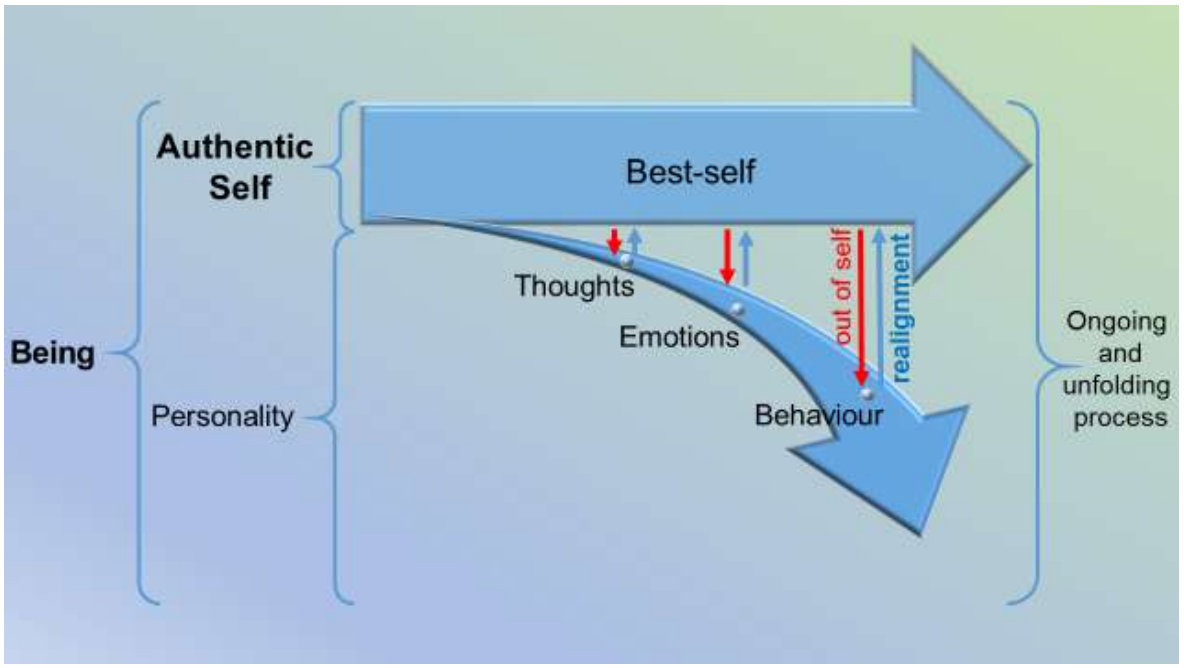


Figure 6.3: Personal transformation – developing authenticity as an ongoing and unfolding process.

The red downward line arrows represent reacting to challenges or stressors by **moving out of self** – that blocks the revelation of best-self characteristics and results in not acting in line with best-self. The blue upward line arrows represent responding to challenges or stressors by **moving back *into self*** (**realignment)** – so that personality responses (i.e., thoughts, emotions, behaviour) reflect the expression of best-self characteristics. Finally, the right brace represents that **developing authenticity** is an **ongoing and unfolding process.** Hence, when we interact with each other, our personality responses will either reflect or conceal our authentic selves.

Developing authenticity enables one to cope better and to restore and optimise well-being. Against the background of human beings being part of a greater whole (Heidegger, 1953/1996) and of something bigger than the self (Eng, 2015), participants could trace their authentic selves back to their source of strength and energy. Hence, for participants there are spiritual aspects to developing authenticity as well. Developing authenticity is set in motion through intentional actions and interactions with others, when our needs and expectations of self to be like best-self have not been met. Conceptually, our idea of best-self comes from an ingrained

understanding of who we need to be in relation to others. This self-expectation is influenced by our spiritual beliefs, values and principles, which in turn determine our spiritual identity. Therefore, if there is a conflict between our spiritual identity (as determined by what we believe is good and just, e.g., according to our religious background) and how we are when interacting with others, we feel inauthentic and dissatisfied with the self. Spiritual essence is the deepest inner subjective level that gives importance and meaning to life, and is reflected by the terms “soul” and “psyche” that may be regarded as roughly the same (Corbett, 2010). The connection to one’s authentic source occurs by means of the highest parts of being – through the soul, with its components of mind and spirit (Moreland, 1998; Poll & Smith, 2003) – as described in Chapter Five.

Fourthly, I came to understand what the nature of authentic human being is. On my personal journey of developing authenticity, I knew that wanting to be like my higher power motivated me to be a better human being, toward myself and others. I strive to be like Him, but I have never thought of this aspect as, or articulated it before as, a *need* for myself. Especially, in relation to what then motivates me to want to transform the energies of my emotions. I understand this need now through the assumptions of transpersonal psychology, according to which existence has spiritual dimensions and humans have a profound need for transcendental experiences (Valverde, 2016). In relation to careers, authenticity is also one of the unique career needs of women that relates to their well-being (Barnard, 2018; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Nonetheless, I know for sure that I cause myself unhappiness when I do not respond according to His example. This understanding draws me to tap into God as a source of energy and strength when I need to think and feel differently; when I need to imitate His *being*, which for me is love. At the same time, love is associated with authentic living (Vaughan, 2002), while our emotions are expressions of love or of fear (Zukav, 2001), regardless of religion. As Vaughan (2002) related love to authenticity and spirituality, I conceptualise love in these contexts and particularly within the context of my own as well as participants’ best-self experiences.

Love is a way of being (Wilhoit, 2009) and responding that brings about well-being (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Zukav, 2001). It is characterised by emotions, virtues, thought forms and behaviour (1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Themes Two and Three) that reflect care and concern for self (Dewar, 2016; Heidegger, 1953/1996), others and their higher power (Wilhoit, 2009). Love also manifests in careers (transpired under Themes Two and Three), since individuals experience their best selves when they do work that they are passionate about and that gives meaning to their own and others' lives. As a trademark of authentic living (Vaughan, 2002), love is an intention reflecting the energy of the soul to which the personality continuously aspires (Zukav, 2001). Hence, although participants identify with the biblical notion of love and identify with their higher power as *being* love, I do not wish to attach love as a spiritual value to a particular religion. For example, Suzuki (2010b) sees no need to compare or differentiate between Christianity and Buddhism. Accordingly, it is about appreciating one's original nature and to have the purest intention – in Suzuki's case, within the practice of Buddhism. Such a stance aligns with assumptions reflecting that all humans are inherently good (Bergh, 2009c). Therefore, what I posit is that love is a spiritual value universal to authentic being within the context of best-self.

From a spiritual perspective, Suzuki (2010b) explains that we cannot find the meaning in what we do without finding the original source in which our efforts are rooted. Accordingly, should what we do stem from an origin that is pure – from one's original nature – such efforts will also be good and the results satisfying. Upon realisations such as these I am able to shed light on Hiles' (2002) proposed five interdependent humanistic-existential questions, which I situated within Heidegger's ontological question namely "What is human being?" (Chapter Two). By reflecting on these questions, the research question, commonalities in the metatheoretical lenses (Chapter Two) in relation to the primary constructs, as well as the findings and interpretations, I realised that authentic human being *is* love (figure 6.4). Hence, where Heidegger posits that being is authentic or inauthentic, I add that authentic human being is love. Likewise, I posit that the answer to Hiles' (2002) questions, is love also, for it was identified as a significant *into self* response that also relates to the spiritual component of best-self.

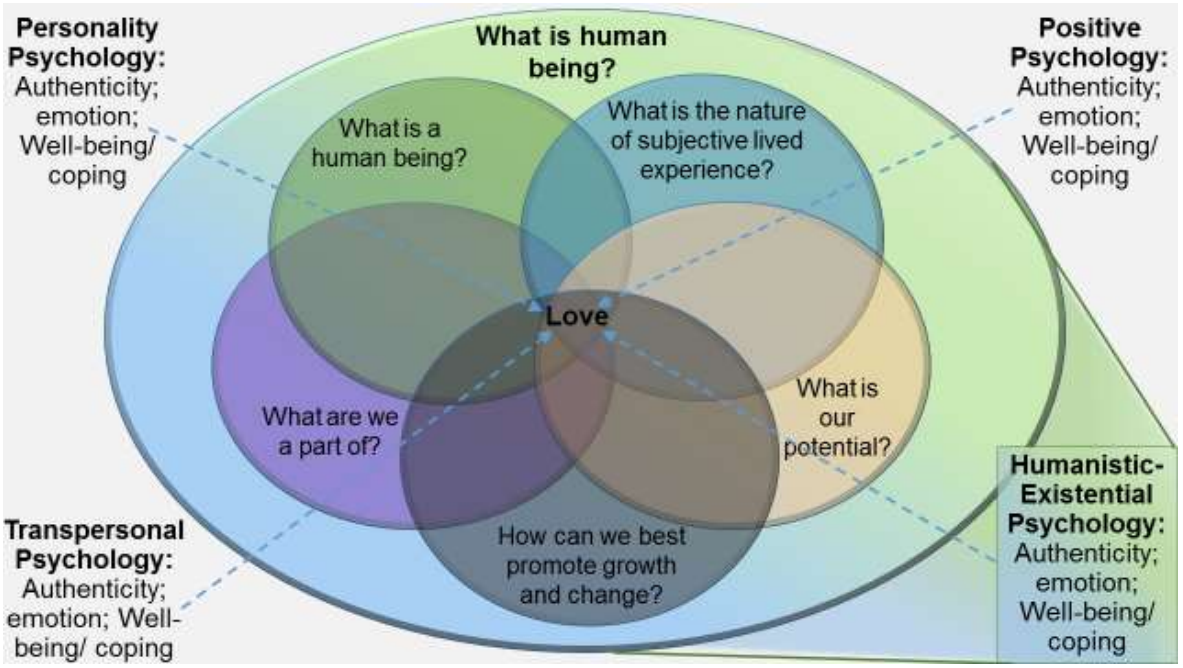


Figure 6.4: Personal transformation – authentic human being *is* love.

I must continuously choose to respond with love, as part of developing my best-self characteristics, if I expect to satisfy the needs of my authentic being. The perspective of soul brings into the awareness that it is not about changing the person with whom we interact, but about being presented with an opportunity to respond to whatever stimuli with best-self characteristics.

6.2.2 Self-reflection against Themes One to Three: toward developing a framework

I number the paragraphs in this section for the reader's convenience when I need to refer back in section 6.3 that will follow.

Para. 1: My interpretation of experiences is a cyclical process from the phenomenon being studied, to my preconceptions (Davidsen, 2013). Accordingly, I cannot know beforehand which of these are relevant, for they are only revealed when I engage with text and reflect on what might have influenced my interpretations. This demonstrates the converging influence of literature and data on my own being, and I know for sure that my personal transformation occurs while exploring authenticity of participants. Now, I reflect on how to apply the themes that were constructed to

my own way of coping with challenges and transforming myself toward best-self. I am discovering more of the preconceptions that influence my meaning making (Davidsen, 2013). I consider what the process stages may involve that will enable one to develop authenticity.

Para. 2: Recalling the notion of *identity work* that denotes the intrapersonal processes we go through in revising, forming and sustaining our identities (Adams & Crafford, 2012), it seems closely linked to developing authenticity. Along the same thinking I regard the ongoing and unfolding process of developing authenticity, during which self is aligned with best-self characteristics, as authenticity work. My notion of *authenticity work* differs, for example, from that of Mirchandani (2012). Accordingly, the particular work context had individuals responding to the need to simultaneously be themselves and like another person. I am able to relate to this view though, if I view participants in my study as needing to be themselves, while simultaneously needing to be like their higher power or to reflect the likeness of God. Then again, women in this study do not view their higher power as "someone else", but as part of themselves. The way in which I made sense of data in my study was particularly influenced by Heidegger's views on ways of being, Gary Zukav's ideas on developing authenticity, pertinent philosophical stances and literature, as well as reflections and revelations during this research process. Next, I present a passage from my research journal (Journal extract 6.1) while pondering on the findings and integrated literature, with further reflections on the primary objective of this research:

Journal extract 6.1: It makes sense to me that all possibilities (authentic and inauthentic) are already present within us, but not necessarily revealed to others. Whenever some aspect comes to be revealed to the self, it is part of the participant's self that either blocks or allows for possibilities to be revealed. It may also be that aspects in my own being prevented me from recognising all the things revealed by participants. For this reason, I had to continuously do self-work to develop my own authenticity, because understanding myself allowed me to see the participants' contributions more clearly. What is evident already as it pertains to developing a framework is the role of mind and intentions in bringing about related consequences such as well-being. Sometimes I struggle to practise a mindfulness skill such as accepting without judgment – I may judge people with preferences different to my own.

For example, when trying to understand others, I try to place myself in their shoes, but then I still judge them. Upon contemplation I realise that, when it comes to developing authenticity within myself, it is not about the person or preference. I judge because I have forgotten that lessons truly learnt, are also accompanied by an altered or enhanced level of awareness. The other person may have gone through the same experience, but failed to learn from it, so that his or her level of awareness about it remains unchanged. I can attain non-judgement by adopting the perception that people are doing what they believe is best, given their level of awareness at the time. Therefore, to place myself in another's shoes completely, I need to be able to place myself on (or within) another's level of awareness as well. This understanding removes my desire to want to manipulate others into how I want them to be. I must still wish other persons loving consequences as well – and not wish for hurtful ones and lack grace because I do not agree with their paths chosen. Hence, my intentions for others must also be aligned with the nature of best-self, even if their preferences differ from my own.

Para. 3: On my authentic journey, *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics*[1] requires that I understand my own and others' preferences and how to manage these as well. I find that the habitual nature of my personality (and of others) in itself may become a challenge or stressor[2], because the situation may require something different from me, but I may want to stay the same. If modes of being are authentic or inauthentic (Dewar, 2016), what came to light from the empirical study may be categorised as either one or the other – according to what leads one to move into self or out of self (Heidegger, 1953/2010). How do I then make sense of the aspect of personality preferences[3] as possibilities in relation to developing authenticity? Well, when I view anything from only one side, conflict is caused (Suzuki, 2010b). For Kernis and Goldman (2006) stated that functioning with enhanced authenticity requires enhanced awareness of one's contradictory predispositions[4], integrating these, and not just recognising and accepting only some. When participants practise awareness, their emotions inform them of how their way of thinking, feeling and behaving are aligned with best-self. Hence,

[1] A subtheme from Theme Three: realigning self with best-self characteristics

[2] Theme One: potential agents for moving the self away from best-self; subtheme: interpersonal differences and conflict potential

[3] Theme Three: realigning self with best-self characteristics; subtheme: becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics; subcategory: *gaining insight into intra- and interpersonal processes*

[4] Theme Three: realigning self with best-self characteristics; subtheme: becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics; subcategory: *choosing mindful living over a mindless one*

emotions serve as a guide to their thinking and behaviour (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012).

Para. 4: For example, when I was introduced to my own personality profile (according to Myers-Briggs typology), I became aware that I may become frustrated with others having a preference different to my own[5], or even with the same preference, but of which the strength differed from my own. Frustration[6] does not align with best-self. However, frustration serves a purpose in helping me to become aware that I need to change. I think I would not be confronted with feeling authentic or inauthentic if I am not exposed to interactions with others. This revelation gives me healthier perspectives of others as having this special role in my life, so that I can see my interactions with them as meaningful. Meaningful, in that they present me with an opportunity to choose authentic being, no matter what. Hence, if how I react to preferences do not contribute toward aligning personality responses with my best-self, what must I do to realign? Well, converting Theme Three into the question of how to realign self with best-self characteristics enabled me to answer this, and also the research question. The themes reflect that the process of developing authenticity is one in which Theme Three (*realigning*) has to amount to coping effectively with Theme One (*potential agents*), as prompted by Theme Two (*indicators*). Toward this end I must employ my mind and exercise the intention to choose from already existing possibilities of responses – not only those I may revert to out of habit. After all, coping is exactly that – emotional processes and human responses to challenges and stressors (Ryan et al., 2014).

Para. 5: In relation to coping, Lazarus (1993) posited that inconsistency (state or process concept) and consistency (trait concept) are two sides of the same coin and therefore both significant. Depending on which one is employed more, one will stand out over the other (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Lazarus, 1993). Fleeson and Wilt (2010) found that varying behaviour, or acting contradictory to traits or character do not reduce levels of authenticity. Accordingly, flexible behaviour may at times reflect enhanced authenticity and appears to be characteristically genuine. This notion

[5] Theme One: potential agents for moving the self away from best-self; subtheme: interpersonal differences and conflict potential
[6] Theme Two: indicator of the need to develop authenticity

means that it will be beneficial to me if I can develop in both approaches as described by Lazarus, especially the process approach to coping. In any event, a trait is not a defensive response, but a dispositional attribute that may result in a response (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Even Waterman et al. (2010) stated that fruitful eudaimonic behaviour (well-being) depends not only on personality traits, but also on choices made to realise best potentials. The coping process approach focusses on the influences of contextual and temporal aspects on coping (Lazarus, 1993). Accordingly, this approach is therefore more successful in incorporating particular coping actions and thoughts in different stress contexts that demand coping. Viewing coping as a process, complements the process nature of developing authenticity. I recognise in the themes how aspects reflected by self, others and a higher power play their part in ongoing processes of coping and developing authenticity (Journal extract 6.2):

Journal extract 6.2: Under Theme Two, comprising indicators of the need to develop authenticity *(Thoughts)*, it explicitly transpired how thoughts may "mirror" best-self. The same can be inferred though from the remainder of Theme Two, so that my own responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour act as mirrors that reflect my experience (figure 6.1) of my *being* as authentic or inauthentic. Also under Theme Three that involves realigning self with best-self characteristics *(Subtheme: becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics*, as it pertains to *gaining insight into intra- and interpersonal processes)*: here it transpired that beings enable each other to be revealed and understood (Benner, 2008). In my own developing authenticity too, I recognise that I need inner-action and interaction to activate responses from which to assess my 'best-self' in relation to others, to the divine and therefore in relation to myself. Further, our interactions with others will keep on mirroring our developmental areas in relation to authenticity – for developing authenticity is part of our life's journey. This requires of us the ability to inner-act and interact in emotionally intelligent ways *(dealing with emotional demands posed to self)*, so as to ensure that the personality characteristics we express are in line with the intended outcomes of authentic being and well-being. The mirror concept transpired elsewhere in Theme Three under subtheme of reconnecting to a higher power *(viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective)*. Participants' experiences were that thinking, feeling and acting like their higher power (Clines, 1986; Howard, 2009) mirror their best-self or authentic being.

Para. 6: Emotions speak to me the "loudest" and mirror my developmental needs most clearly, when activated by a stimulus. In myself, I view this as the mirror effect in developing authenticity, with the stimulus being a challenge or stressor. My

emotions, on their part, are reflective of how I think about (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009) or view such stimuli. On my journey toward developing authenticity, it is not so much about my preference as it is about how I respond to it. My preferences, perceptions, needs and expectations of self and others and how these are met, require from me a “response”, and that response consequently makes me feel good or bad – best-self or less than (i.e., authentic or inauthentic).

Para. 7: So how do I respond authentically when my needs are disappointed? If a stimulus activates within me impatience – impatience is a stress emotion and does not align with best-self. I may move toward best-self by adopting the perception that a slow driver (for example), who activates within me impatience, is presenting me with an opportunity to choose to develop the skill of patience. Patience is a positive emotion in line with authentic being and a well-being emotion at that. Similarly, I have changed how I perceive preferences: my own and other’s preferences serve as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self. For example, for the most part I prefer introvert tendencies. An extravert may activate within me irritation or judgement for being different to myself. However, any stress emotion or negative attitude do not align with best-self. I may adopt the perception that the extravert (in the event of activating negative emotions) is presenting me with an opportunity to choose to respond with best-self characteristics instead. These may include acceptance, respect and love. In addition, because I prefer introvert tendencies, I find that an extravert also mirrors my need to develop the preference opposite to my own – in this case, extravert habits or tendencies. With time I am able to understand the other person better as I am able to place myself within his or her shoes. More than that, I am able to place myself *in* another person’s preference. Should a situation then require, I am able to venture into my less preferred parts with less defensiveness and effort, and it becomes easier to respond to people’s uniqueness from love, or in line with best-self.

Para. 8: Hence, in my interactions with others it remains my thinking, emotional and/or behavioural responses to people and things that reflect my authenticity or inauthenticity. It is my desire or intention for others to be different that causes disappointment if they do not concede to my expectations. Hence, it is crucial that I

take time to contemplate before I react to internal and external demands. During this time is where I become aware of the emotions and thinking underlying my preferences, the intentions that go with these, as well as the behaviour and consequences they may give rise to. In evaluating the consequences of such responses, I do feel my best-self when that which I chose to create through my responses, are loving and good for self and for others, regardless of my personality preferences. These do correspond with Fleeson and Wilt (2010), according to whom some behaviour feels more authentic, given the consequences and content of how individuals act, irrespective of preferred traits. This notion is also what Zukav (2000) describes as authentic empowerment, during which choices are made and things are done, with the intention to create consequences such as sharing, cooperation, harmony and reverence for life. Suzuki (2010b) describes this power from within, as one through which we make ourselves and our environment pure, so that we can learn from those we encounter and reveal friendliness to others.

Next, the "how to go about" developing authenticity is constructed from data and self-reflection, as reflected in the three core themes (from Chapter Five).

6.3 FIVE STEPS IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY

In this section I derive from the three themes as presented in Chapter Five and my self-reflections in this chapter, a conceptual integration to formulate action strategies to guide one in doing authenticity work. My findings concur that developing authenticity is an *ongoing and unfolding process* (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014; Heidegger, 1953/1996). Therefore, this section reflects the convergence of previous themes (see Chapter Five) in action format, as practised by women when developing authenticity, as well as my related transformational experiences and broadened presuppositions discussed above. The *into self* and *out of self* responses (*indicators of the need to develop authenticity*) as well as the ways of realigning self with best-self characteristics, coincide to find expression in the following action steps that are formulated as essential stages in the process of developing authenticity: *turning within; recognising possible ways of being; managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour; making conscious choices and taking responsible actions;*

and *evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards*. Authenticity work transpired as the purposeful and intentional activation of a process or dynamic toward feeling and being authentic.

6.3.1 Turning within

Turning within denotes the first action step or phase in this process of developing authenticity. It is constituted upon the subthemes in Theme Three, integrated with my conceptualisation of realigning self with best-self (as discussed in section 6.2.1). During the act of turning within (Siegel, 2012), the person takes the time to go inside the self. Contextually, this action step is the result of Themes One and Two. As first step, it allows for reflection, self-exploration and self-work. Turning within amounts to returning to self as described by PO6: *"It requires a woman to really be able to stand and to shift yourself back into your own human being."* In the words of TO5, it may also entail turning away from some people or things standing in the way of who they know themselves to be, or want to be.

In order for *being* to turn back to self, this possibility must be shown to the self through a call of conscience, something always present and that commands one to a particular way of being (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Such "command" or "call back" may come from a person's higher power, upon the realisation that one's way of being does not reflect best-self. Individuals may go to an emotional place from where they may access their higher power or spiritual source when facing challenges or stressors (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017). One may do so by talking to God, or just by being still in His presence to receive spiritual guidance. I personally experienced this need to return to best-self through retreating to a higher power, as reflected on in section 6.2.1 (e.g., fourth realisation). Similarly, TO1 described: *"I had to go through all of those things in order for me to realise that okay, now I'm sitting still, now I can gather my thoughts, God talk to me, show me where I went wrong … what I can do to better myself."*

Turning within is necessary, since a self that is based on the people around us (Regan, 2012) is inauthentic for the most part (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Hence,

developing authenticity requires from us to quiet the “they-self” or outside voices, so that we are able to listen to own self (Heidegger, 1953/1996).

6.3.2 Recognising possible ways of being

Participants were able to recognise possible ways of being that may be adopted in life. When they have this knowledge it opens up for them the possibilities around their multifaceted characteristics and predispositions that encourage, what Kernis and Goldman (2006) call, the integration of their innate polarities. Accordingly, people are both masculine or feminine, emotional or stoic, introverted or extraverted, and so on, to some extent. I also experienced being transformed through this study, in that my awareness enhanced of different alternative ways for me to be, and that it was my choice (see section 6.2.1, e.g., third realisation; section 6.2.2, e.g., Journal extract 6.1). The language used by participants in these regards (Lehman et al., 2018) contains opposites of some sorts: fall or stand up; anger or peace; not happy or best-self; femininity or toughness; quick to anger or not. Seeing possible selves, having self-knowledge and integration of opposite characteristics link in that they are all very significant aspects that contribute toward developing authenticity – forming pathways toward authentic self and well-being (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Roberts et al., 2005). As such, *recognising possible ways of being* constitutes the second action step in doing authenticity work toward developing an authentic self. TO6 described this ability well: *“I get angry quickly ... but not that quickly anymore, because I work on it.”* The best-self characteristics under Theme Three can be regarded as possible ways of being. So can the responses under Theme Two, such as when viewing an emotion as either happy or sad, and so forth.

Possible ways of being are authentic or inauthentic (Heidegger, 1953/2010). However, each option involves various other possibilities of emotional, cognitive, behavioural responses and characteristics that can be categorised as being aligned with, or not being aligned with, best-self. Learned responses or early personal experiences may cause people to accept a single way of viewing information about experiences as truth (Carson & Langer, 2006). However, one must be open to learn about various possibilities (Baron & Parent, 2015; Suzuki, 2010a), and to different

ways of viewing people and situations. Nonetheless, individuals must also decide for themselves if they have chosen possibilities from their own self (Dewar, 2016), or whether they allowed themselves to be given possibilities that were impressed by the interpretations others have of them (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Recognising possible ways of being must occur on an ongoing basis within the process of developing authenticity, since each response we take (described next) must be preceded by this awareness, should we endeavor to reveal our best selves.

6.3.3 Managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour

When women in this study develop authenticity they learn to manage their perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour well. To do so they develop and employ the best-self characteristics that were constructed (under Theme Three). This action step therefore also reflects Daniel Goleman's notion of emotional intelligence, according to whom feelings, thoughts and actions may be skilfully aligned, and emotional states consciously shaped and controlled to bring about desired outcomes (McGrath, 2013). This skill involves reclaiming their own selves and who they truly are, which one participant (PO6) most clearly described in the following manner: *"You maybe did a domestic violence complaint … now when you go home then you must work your own self back into yourself."* As explained in my personal transformation (e.g., section 6.2.2, Journal extract 6.1), both possibilities of being true to self, and not being true to self already exist within (Heidegger, 1953/1996). To reveal authentic being participants and I intentionally adjust or align aspects of our thinking, emotions and behaviour – with each other, but also with their envisaged outcomes. In providing examples here of how some best-self characteristics are applied in this action step, I notice how their application may manifest as related skills, but worthy of separate identification under the best-self characteristics. These are also discussed toward the end of this action step.

Participants manage their perceptions and thoughts in various ways, allowing them to view challenges or stressors differently. Zhang et al. (2018) describe how perceptions of the self as good and true influence perceptions regarding authenticity. Accordingly, behaviours that contradict their moral ideals ought to unsettle their

perceptions regarding authenticity. However, participants may favourably alter the way they think about, or look at people, things or situations. I relate to this very strongly, since I experienced that it is the effective management of my perceptions that allows me to alter my particular response (e.g., section 6.2.2, para. 7). They also alter their perceptions by *returning to a more optimistic orientation to life,* as reflected by PO2: *"My philosophy is never dwell on something that is done, it does not help and makes you sick. Deal with it and move on … Must say it made me a much happier person."*

As I endeavoured to do (e.g., section 6.2.2, para. 3), participants employ *mindfulness* perspectives, such as focussing their minds on the task at hand. Mindfulness in this vein is also described by Carson and Langer (2006). In this way they are not distracted by negative things that may occur in their environments: *'You will have names that you are called, but you must not be distracted by that. You must look forward and do what you are doing'* (PO4). They consider aspects that might cause others to act in a certain manner – thus *placing themselves in another's shoes.* This aspect also demonstrates *compassion* (*positive emotion – "into self" response*) as an aspect of mindfulness, similarly noted by Suzuki (2010a), and on its part contributing to *emotional intelligence* (McGrath, 2013). Emotional intelligence is also related to *spiritual intelligence* (Yadav & Punia, 2016) since it concerns developing intra- and interpersonal understanding (empathy) and relates to developing authenticity as well as psychological well-being (Vaughan, 2002). Here, I think of my realisation (section 6.2.2, Journal extract 6.1) that truly helps me to think differently about others' experiences. It helps me to have more understanding and compassion for others, but also for myself – that acceptance without judgement is enhanced by placing myself on another's level of awareness. An enhanced level of awareness facilitates a change in perception that changes one's experience, world and reality, while promoting spiritual growth (Valverde, 2016).

Participants may also consider things or people within context or the bigger picture in general, or within the bigger picture spiritually, revealing their *awareness of the presence of a higher power.* Either way, these reveal positive emotions such as

humility and compassion (*dealing with emotional demands posed to self)* that help them to effectively cope with negative emotions such as fear. Hence, by processing thoughts, behaviour and experiences mindfully, they are able to reconsider and reinterpret things from different perspectives (Carson and Langer, 2006). The ability to view things from various perspectives, to understand the interconnectedness between belief, perception and behaviour, and to accept responsibility for all, are indicative of spiritual intelligence as well (Vaughan, 2002). PO1 illustrated this ability by conveying: *"I just realised one day, a person cannot fear a person, a person must only fear God … she is also a human being, maybe she has her own issues that causes her to be the way she is."* Hence, by employing enhanced mindful awareness, participants and I may change our relationship to the experience instead of altering the experience itself (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Our resultant behaviour further reflects that we learn to practise *mindfulness attitudes* such as *learning from experiences* (Carson & Langer, 2006), and *letting go* so as to respond to situations better. Therefore, the effective management of our perceptions also involves redirecting our motivations, enhancing awareness, developing wisdom and emotional transformation (Walsh & Vaughan, 1993). TO6 adequately described: *"One gets angry quickly … now I learnt not to attack you immediately … I just look at you and I breathe."*

Women in this study manage their emotions in various ways. The words and actions that people direct at them may activate certain emotive energies within. Being able to manage emotions affects the ability of the mind to adapt to stressors that may occur (Siegel, 2012). Participants determine whether emotions have been activated within or not, and the type of emotion, by reflecting on events (Reisenzein & Weber, 2009). This ability demonstrates *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics.* I found this skill particularly life-changing, since I may understand others better, precisely by deepening my understanding of my own self (section 6.2.2, Journal extract 6.2). More precisely, such mindfulness happens when I am awake to the interaction between emotion and perception (Cilliers & Flotman, 2016; Reisenzein & Weber, 2009), and to how they relate to my own authentic development and ultimate well-being (Ariza-Montes et al., 2017). Like participants, I then alter how I feel about people and events, which is possible by altering or

broadening the thoughts, perceptions or perspectives as described above. For example, certain adaptive responses are typically described as making life easier or a person happier (PO2 earlier here). Also for me, as amplified in my personal transformation, if I change how I view my emotions (especially negative ones) then I can transform them (section 6.2.1, first realisation). Hence, learned emotional responses to self, people, ideas and things influence well-being (Carson & Langer, 2006). An emotional response such as compassion that stems from mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2012), helps the human mind to release the harmful effects of negative emotions (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018). Through employing mindfulness, people can change bad habits or traits (Carson & Langer, 2006), while unlearning of particular responses may sometimes be required to realign with best-self (TO6 above).

Now for other manifestations of best-self characteristics. Some participants' experiences clearly reflect having developed *internal locus of control* and using it to manage responses (Koydemir et al., 2018). This facet is also evident in a study about coping behaviour by Barnard et al. (2016). Individuals believe to have control over their destiny or outcomes and will act to gain control of situations (Kulshrestha & Sen, 2006). They adapt by intentionally integrating and steering brain, mind and relationships in the direction of health (Siegel, 2012). TO2 described: *"I have never allowed any person … to make me behave less than my best-self. I personally have my own willpower and motivation on the inside and these play a very big role in helping me to be my best-self."* This experience shows how internal locus of control is linked to what one believes to be true about self (Koydemir et al., 2018), and is therefore made possible by having a *positive self-concept*. Hence, best-self behaviour is dictated from within and includes not allowing external elements to make one behave less than best-self.

In my personal transformation I explained the crucial role of my mind while its creative power was also highlighted during my developing authenticity (table 6.1 and Journal extract 6.2). The self can dis-identify from feelings, thoughts and sensations so that one can simply observe whatever comes up in awareness (Vaughan, 2002). This ability makes it possible to interpret life experiences and things clearly, without being bothered by these (Kilcup, 2016; Suzuki, 2010b). Kulshrestha and Sen (2006)

found that internal locus of control and *emotional intelligence* correlate significantly with subjective well-being. Participants in their study who possessed internal locus of control and elevated emotional intelligence, scored considerably high for positive affect and considerably low for negative affect. Emotional intelligence makes coping possible in any situation and results in a well-adjusted individual (Kulshrestha & Sen, 2006).

Viewing this action step in its totality again, I need the ability to manage responses when that which have been activated within me, have the potential of moving me out of best-self. They also have the potential of having me lose sight of my identity as best-self. More specifically, of my spiritual identity through which I can reconnect to the energy and strength of a higher power. When we have the impulse to act in a certain manner, Zukav (2001) suggests that one should place a space between the impulse and the reaction, affording time to think about the situation more clearly before acting. This ability is reflected by best-self characteristics that allow us to do just that, such as *dealing with emotional demands posed to self*, *choosing mindful living over a mindless one,* as well as *tapping into a source of strength and energy.*

In myself I understand these notions to mean that, when a challenge or stressor occurs, there is an initial thought and/or emotion activated within me. If required, I must effect change in the way of thinking and feeling before I react overtly (section 6.2.2, para. 8). Hence, placing this space between the impulse and the reaction allows us to choose consciously as opposed to unconsciously, as describes next. The remainder of the best-self characteristics, which were constructed from Theme Three, find expression in the action steps to follow.

6.3.4 Making conscious choices and taking responsible actions

Participants recognise the need to develop authenticity when they become aware that the emotions and/or thoughts that have been activated within them initially – by the challenge or stressor – will not contribute to them moving in the direction of best-self. They make their own choices consciously (Dewar, 2016) and follow these up with responsible actions (Johnson, 2008), to move toward best-self. They direct their

mind – the flow of energy and information – with intention, as described by Siegel (2012). One of the most profound insights gained for me during my reflections is that I already am that which I want to be, while revealing or concealing best-self is a matter of choice (section 6.2.1, third and fourth realisations). We may consciously choose emotions associated with best-self (see table 5.2) such as love, humility, compassion – positive emotions. The related consequence is well-being (Siegel, 2012). They make choices about what they want to succeed in and achieve, about what they will allow and not allow in their lives and the modes of being they want to adopt or not. In line with Bergh (2009c), being human is an ongoing process that requires one to make decisions in relation to the world and about personal experiences. These include choices made but not yet acted on.

Furthermore, participants choose bearing in mind that when they make a given choice and take a certain action or not, they simultaneously set in motion the likely outcomes as well. In life and on our authentic journeys we are responsible (Padgett, 2007) for all of our deeds and responses, not just for some of them – for positive and negative responses (Zukav, 2001). This part of the process demonstrates *practising responsible self-expression.* Correspondingly, Jean-Paul Sartre posited that humans have a responsibility toward themselves, in terms of the freedom they have to choose what to make of their situations (Johnson, 2008). Accordingly, we can choose to adopt whatever attitudes we want to, but each choice – of how to respond with emotions, decisions, actions and perceptions – acts back on the one who made it. PO5 describes this perspective well: *"But then it is good I did not because then it is also something that could have hurt someone's feelings, and I do not like that, I like to live in peace with everybody."* I reached this same understanding in the broadening of my presuppositions (table 6.1).

Contextually, maintaining who one truly is and obtaining desired results require conscious determination, as characteristic of *emotional intelligence* (McGrath, 2013). The combination of authenticity and emotional intelligence reduce stress (McGrath, 2013). These and other outcomes can be assessed within the next action step.

6.3.5 Evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards

Participants are able to evaluate their responses and its consequences against best-self standards. Best-self standards are responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour experienced when one employs best-self characteristics to realign self with best-self; which will be furthering to one's moving into best-self, or already aligned with authentic being. Hence, this action step involves both Themes Two and Three. When at their best, participants employ coping thoughts to deal with specific stressful experiences, as also noted in Lazarus' (1993) coping theory. Thoughts are positive or affirmative, reflecting healthy self-esteem and values (Kernis, 2003). When at their best, their emotions include exceptional feelings of well-being (Roberts et al., 2005). These include positive emotions, feelings of responsible self-expressiveness, feelings associated with experiences of self-actualisation, being alive and living according to one's purpose and passion (Waterman, 1993). When at their best, their behaviour includes exceptional actions that affect persons, systems, workplaces and environments positively and profoundly (Roberts et al., 2005). Emotion and behaviour come together in that some behaviour is experienced as feeling more authentic, because of the consequences and content of the way people act (Fleeson & Wilt, 2010).

Best-self standards also involve the best-self characteristics themselves, with their related skills, used in the realignment process (Theme Three): *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics, reconnecting to a higher power, returning to a more optimistic orientation to life, making a meaningful contribution* and *practising responsible self-expression.* I experience Theme Three to reflect the ways in which I employ my personality responses from Theme Two. We become emotional or stressed about things that have personal importance to us – about goals, values, intentions and plans that we have seriously committed to (Lazarus, 1991). Accordingly, these are motivational concepts that together with cognitive actions explain our emotion, but our drives and needs may explain our emotion also. The subtheme from Theme Three that particularly revealed that we also have spiritual needs that we value, is that of *reconnecting to a higher power.* When at their best, individuals think about their identity (Roberts et al., 2005) as a spiritual one (Poll &

Smith, 2003) – as do I (section 6.2.1, fourth realisation; section 6.2.2, para. 2). If our needs have not been met to have our thoughts, emotions and behaviour mirror those of our best-self and/or higher self, there is also the need to develop authenticity.

Overall, the process of developing authenticity produces positive responses and consequences, while not being one's best-self was associated with negative ones. Positive responses in turn recreates resources that help us to move toward that possibility of best-self (Roberts et al., 2005). Hence, it is about the responses (i.e., thoughts, emotions and behaviour) and related consequences that individuals create in, or contribute to the world. I too can evaluate the types of responses that satisfy my authentic being (section 6.2.2, para. 8), since these standards are underpinned by the accompanying emotions that feel good, as brought about in self and in others. Evaluating responses and consequences occur from a place of mindfulness, for the purpose of exploring present experiences as opposed to criticising the self (Carson & Langer, 2006). It occurs from a place of being honest and accepting of all parts of one's personality and with the sole intention of returning to best-self. Findings reflect Heidegger's (1953/2010) notion that the ways of being that are chosen by individuals, have associated consequences of moving into self or out of self. In the event where responses and consequences are regarded as not corresponding with one's idea of best-self, there is a recognition that this is not how we want to be. We recognise that we need to change or transform our coping and adjustment responses (Barnard et al., 2016). In such instances, we turn within again, along the ongoing and unfolding process, to realign with authentic self.

6.4 CONTEXTUALISING THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY

I contextualise the five action steps (section 6.3) in the process of developing authenticity by using the theoretical approach of a stimulus-processing-response framework – by understanding what activates the process. Also, in terms of the themes that I identified in Chapter Five, these led me to think that Theme One (*potential agents*) and Theme Two (*indicators*) form part of this context framework. These themes become part of the stimuli that activate the entire process. Theme Two forms part of both stimulus (e.g., internal) and response, demonstrating the cyclical nature of the process at its most basic levels of thought and emotion –

transformation of what is. Theme two serves as stimulus when responses are not aligned with best-self, so that thoughts, emotions and behaviour must then be employed intentionally toward desired outcomes of authentic being and well-being. Figure 6.2 (under section 6.2.1) also serves to illustrate the contextualisation discussed here: so that the red downward arrows represent responses that divert from best-self as a result of stimuli or *potential agents*; while the blue upward arrows represent realignment of responses with best-self, upon awareness of, and choice to do the necessary authenticity work. That broadening of my presuppositions helps me to describe the entire stimulus effect within which the framework for developing authenticity occurs.

When *turning within*, we learn to insert a space for processing in between the stimuli (i.e., challenge or stressor) and the response. This facet may be represented as *stimulus-processing-response* reactions, because individuals have the ability to influence interactions taking place between them and their environment (Leahey, as cited in Albertyn & Bergh, 2009). When one becomes conscious of the authenticity dynamic, you realise that you are not responding to the stimulus per se. You are reacting – with initial thoughts, emotions and behaviour – to your perception of the stimuli (see section 6.2.2). I emphasise "initial" responses because, if these were aligned with best-self in the first place there would be no need to realign anything. More importantly, these initial emotions already carry certain energies (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012), vibrations or intentions of what is likely to manifest (Zukav, 2001), even if one has not yet made the effects observable through overt behaviour. They already hold potential consequences in that they influence further perceptions, which ultimately influence behaviour.

In relation to authenticity, Zukav (2014) distinguishes between the terms *respond* and *react*, providing a useful perspective. He uses *respond* to describe awakened ways, as characterised by choosing consciously and living life authentically. He uses *react* to describe acting as you did before, implying old ways or habits, linked to choosing unconsciously. I infer that, not acting in accordance with best-self involves reacting to stimuli unconsciously, meaning without realising that one has the power to choose to respond with best-self characteristics, regardless of what the stimuli

activated within. It means acting without realising that every personality response chosen has corresponding and related consequences. Hence, when the need arises to realign with best-self, this is because my initial reactions were contrary to best-self. Therefore, the dynamics involved in developing authenticity when I realign personality responses with my best-self, may be viewed as a *stimulus-reaction-processing-response* experience. Within this *reaction* space is where the mirror effect (section 6.2.2) takes place. During this mirror effect it is not the potential agents (person, thing or event) that serve as the mirror; my initial reactions to these agents reflect my developmental needs. Where such initial reactions were not in line with best-self, participants may tap into their higher power for strength to help them to realign and become more like it. When they do so, they may communicate with God through their spirits (Poll & Smith, 2003; Romans 8:16), which together with mind are faculties of the soul (Moreland, 1998). In this process they believe God brings to life new capacities of the spirit (Moreland, 1998).

Hence, I now view *soul* as that which allows an individual's spirit to reconnect to the spirit of their higher power, so that the energy and nature of their authentic source can flow through their being, to renew their minds and inspire their responses. The time turning within is used to recognise possible ways of being – authentic or inauthentic – and to manage perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour. These aspects correspond to the *processing* concept alluded to, facilitating changes in perspectives also. A valuable perspective to hold is therefore a spiritual one, in which one becomes mindful of the needs of the soul. Core being or self *is* soul (Moreland, 1998; Valverde, 2016). As per the broadening of my presuppositions, love characterises authentic living and is the energy of the soul that the personality needs to imitate (Zukav, 2001). From this perspective, when the needs of the soul are not being met by responding with love to people and events, individuals are not being their best selves, so that the need for developing authenticity is activated. Nonetheless, I posit that the best-self perspective adopted in relation to authenticity in this study, gives the framework for developing authenticity universal worth, across various belief systems. Also, as part of the bigger scheme within which this study is located, developing authenticity is not just a return to best-self, but also a return to well-being.

6.5 PROPOSING A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY

Developing authenticity is a journey that we undertake each day and get to practise each time we are presented with challenges or stressors, while we inner-act and interact. This unfolding process occurs in relation to self, others and best-self. As an individual difference construct, it is formed by an ongoing process of the realignment of personality responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour with best-self. Best-self denotes authentic self, in relation to whom a higher power exists. It is within the context of a person being part of something bigger than the self that the framework for developing authenticity (FDA: figure 6.5) is situated.

In figure 6.3 earlier I illustrated how I came to view developing authenticity within context. However, I did not explain the authenticity work required to bring about the realignment. By incorporating the *potential agents for moving the self away from best-self* (Chapter Five: Theme One) into the conceptualisation, findings derived from data and self-reflection resulted in the crystallisation of the steps or stages involved in developing authenticity. Hence, the overall process now flows as follows: *experiencing challenges or stressors; turning within; recognising possible ways of being; managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour; making conscious choices and taking responsible actions;* and *evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards*. This realignment process is one that amounts to doing authenticity work, during which best-self characteristics and associated skills are intentionally developed and applied so as to reveal authentic self. Hence, it is through our inner-actions and interactions that the need to develop authenticity is activated – the need to respond to challenges and stressors with best-self characteristics. We can begin to understand others also, for we appreciate our individual difference factors as instrumental to each other's moving back toward best and authentic self. Developing authenticity follows the process as described next:

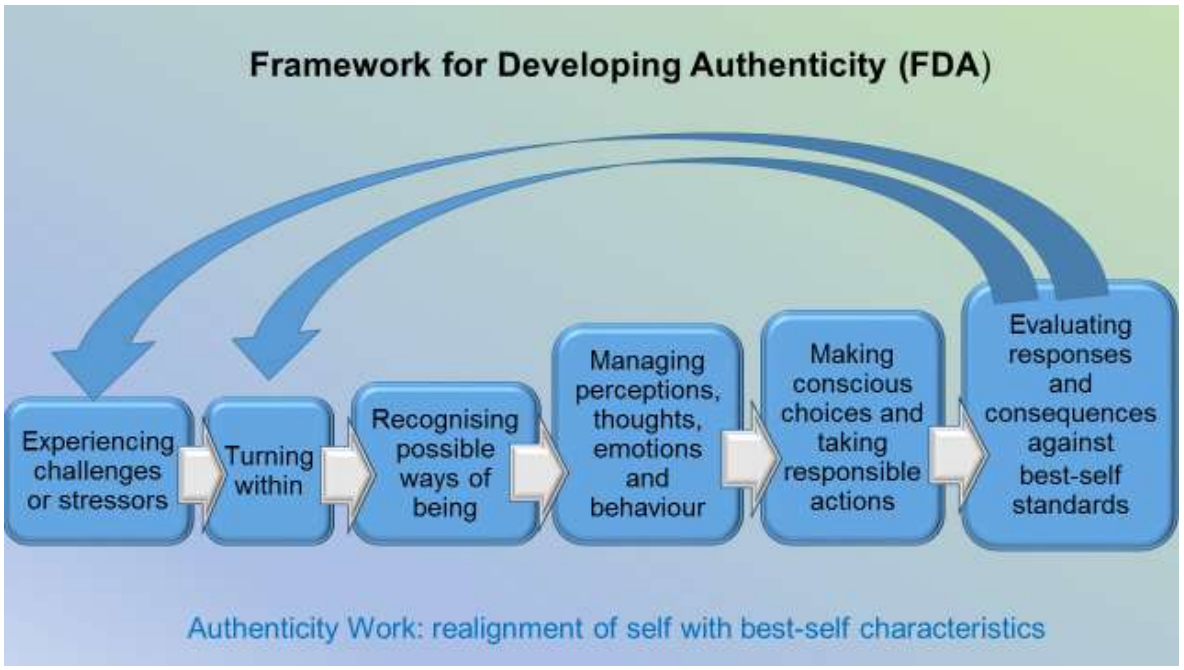


Figure 6.5: Framework for developing authenticity.

1) Experiencing challenges or stressors

Challenges or stressors are experienced (table 6.2) by an individual, as presented by self, another, or the environment. These internal or external stimuli may activate personality responses – thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Positive responses represent *into self* responses and amount to adaptive coping. Negative responses represent *out of self* responses that amount to maladaptive coping and activate the need to develop authenticity. When challenges or stressors elicit negative affect or stress, this activates the need to adjust the self and to develop authenticity as a means of coping to restore well-being. Doing so requires authenticity work as described in the stages to follow.

2) Turning within

Turning within helps one to become aware of what is happening inside of yourself – of the effects that challenges or stressors (*potential agents for moving the self away from best-self*) have on one's being. It affords time to silence the outside influences to listen to self and higher power. Hence, *turning within* involves:

- Becoming mindful of personality aspects of thoughts, emotions and behaviour being activated by the challenge or stressor – indicators of the need to develop authenticity. Mindfulness enables one to consciously experience conscience as calm or disturbed. Sometimes an event may not even necessarily activate a clear-cut positive or negative response, but it may still be lingering in thoughts and emotions as something that feels unsettled or unresolved. Turning within also requires becoming mindful of the physiological sensations in the body, experienced as a result.
- Becoming aware of the mirror effect of developing authenticity (figure 6.6): we mirror ourselves in others and situations in that our reactions to a challenge or stressor (C/S) may reflect our need to develop authenticity. The reaction to a challenge or stressor (stimulus) – as posed by self, people or situations – may mirror (a) developmental areas in need of attention so as to develop authenticity and (b) progress in relation to such development.

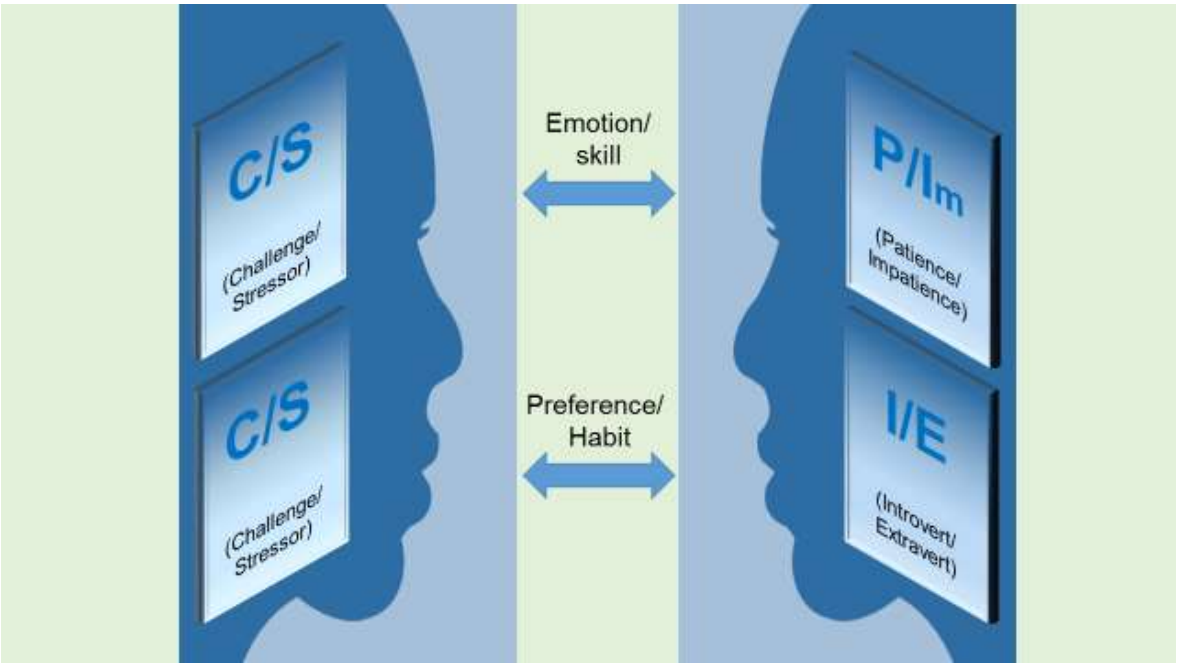


Figure 6.6: The mirror effect in developing authenticity.

For example, when a stimulus activates within a person a negative emotion (e.g., Im: Impatience), then that emotion mirrors the need to develop a positive emotion or skill instead (e.g., P: Patience). Therefore, *potential agents* enable the self to reveal to itself the need to develop authenticity so as to enhance well-being. Should

the same stimulus activate a positive emotion, then such emotion confirms that the person's being is already aligned with best-self. Likewise, if another's personality preference (e.g., E: Extravert or I: Introvert) activates within one such negative emotions as frustration, the negative emotion mirrors the need to develop positive emotions instead, as well as to develop less preferred personality styles within. Personality responses of negative thoughts and behaviour will likewise mirror opportunities to develop authenticity in the same manner, so that positive ones will indicate alignment with best-self, while negative ones do not.

Further, in discerning if the emotion initially activated is a well-being emotion or a stress emotion, well-being emotions also denote authentic needs. These represent needs of the soul or of higher parts of our being, while stress emotions represent the needs of the self or personality that has not yet been transformed into the likeness of best-self:

- Well-being emotions feel good and include positive emotions such as love, happiness, joy, compassion, thankfulness, patience, forgiveness, optimism, confidence, hope and humility.
- Stress emotions do not feel good and include negative emotions of unhappiness, frustration, fear, doubt, anger, jealousy and anxiety.

If it is a well-being emotion, such emotion indicates that thinking and intention are already aligned with authentic self. If it is a stress emotion, this indicates that thinking and intention are not aligned with authentic self. When we keep these associations in our awareness, then we can start to consider various modes of being to adopt for ourselves.

3) Recognising possible ways of being

If left unchanged the stress emotions and related thinking, as activated by challenges or stressors, will lead to moving out of self. *Recognising possible ways of being* brings into consciousness that individuals do not have to accept what has been activated within – especially when of a negative nature – as one's perspective or truth. The best-self characteristics and associated skills all represent multiple

perspectives and opportunities for different ways of being. For example, they enable individuals to see how others differ from themselves, to accept these differences as such, to recognise and access one's spiritual identity, to be more optimistic and to engage in meaningful work.

Hence, when developing authenticity, we become aware that broadly two possible ways of being exist:

- Being authentic – involves *being* that reveals best-self characteristics. Such *being* involves thoughts, emotions and behaviour associated with well-being and a notion of self as informed by one's authentic source.
- Being inauthentic – involves *being* that conceals best-self characteristics, or that keeps these from unfolding. This *being* involves thoughts, emotions and behaviour associated with distress, or a notion of self as informed by the perceptions or expectations of others.

When we realise that both well-being and stress responses exist as possibilities for being in every moment, then we can manage our responses regardless of what has initially been activated within. Therefore, the challenge or stressor does not have to dictate our way of being, for our way of being is anchored within one's authentic source.

4) Managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour

Developing authenticity requires the ability to manage personality responses well. It involves coping effectively with the indicators of the need to develop authenticity, when activated by challenges or stressors. Developing authenticity involves an openness to different ways of viewing these challenges or stressors. When we have multiple perspectives, then we can minimise the conflict that may result from an inability to detach from a one-sided view on how to think and feel. Also, when having a healthier, bigger picture perspective, one is able to think clearly and envision authentic being, so as to illuminate the pathway toward developing authenticity. There must be congruence firstly between thoughts, emotions and behaviour, and secondly between these and envisaged outcomes of authenticity and well-being.

Hence, one cannot expect such outcomes if personality responses are contrary to best-self. A way of being that is aligned with best-self is recognised by well-being emotions. When thoughts, emotions and behaviour are aligned with best-self, one can live mindfully from that well-being energy and make it habit. Such a state equates personality aspects being plugged into one's authentic source, and denotes the connection with the highest or spiritual parts of self (figure 6.7). Conversely, a way of being that is not aligned with best-self has its personality revealing stress thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Therefore, related energies prevent best-self from being expressed through one's personality.

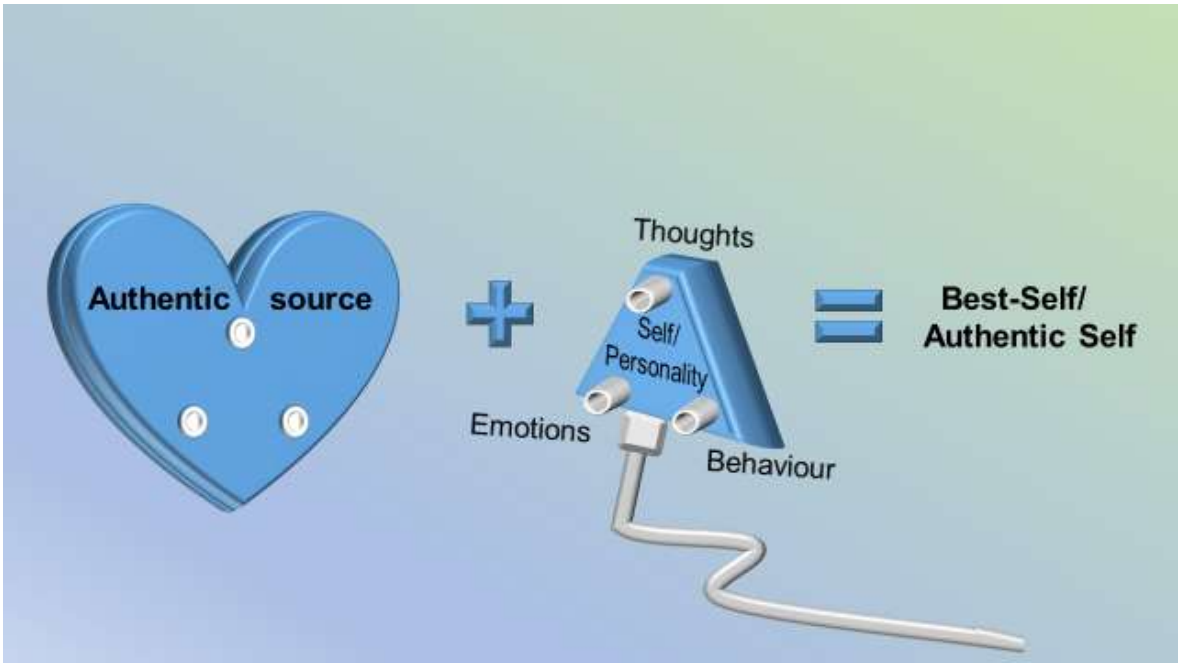


Figure 6.7: Reconnecting personality aspects with best-self or authentic source.

Reconnecting personality aspects to one's authentic source requires intentionally realigning thoughts, emotions and behaviour with each other, but also with authentic outcomes. Such aspects are transformed by renewing the mind so as to alter the perceptions underpinning these. This renewal is done by developing and practising best-self characteristics, which also involve essential skills and attributes (table 6.2). Given the uniqueness of each person some characteristics may require more attention than others, depending on the situation, as well as where individuals are at along their journeys of developing authenticity.

Table 6.2: Best-self characteristics

Core best-self characteristics	Description	*Skills or attributes*
Becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics	• Gaining insight into intra- and interpersonal processes • Dealing with emotional demands posed to self • Choosing mindful living over a mindless one	*Personality insight (e.g., positive self-concept and internal locus of control)* *Emotional intelligence (e.g., emotional awareness; placing yourself in another's shoes: placing yourself on another' level of awareness)* *Mindfulness*
Reconnecting to a higher power	• Having awareness of the presence of a higher power • Viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective • Tapping into a source of strength and energy	*Spiritual intelligence*
Returning to a more optimistic orientation to life	• Adopting a positive way of being • Envisioning a best possible life story	*Optimistic life orientation* *Positive emotions*
Making a meaningful contribution	Discovering the unique purpose and meaning in career and life, and living accordingly	*Self-actualisation*
Practising responsible self-expression	Learning responsible self-expression	*Responsible self-expression*

By altering the underlying thought accompanying an emotion, we can transform the negative emotions that may have initially been activated within by stimuli. We alter the thought by altering the way we think about and/or look at challenges or stressors. For example, think of these as opportunities to realign personality responses with best-self: to move into self by employing emotions and behaviour in line with the

nature of one's authentic source. Similarly, if we adopt a healthier perception of negative emotions – for example, as opportunities for transformation – then we are able to choose positive ones intentionally. Individuals may also view best-self from a spiritual identity perspective, according to which responses are geared toward the fulfilment of authentic needs and expectations. When we view emotions as intentions, we can consciously choose emotions that activate the quality of energy we want to see revealed in life, in terms of authentic being. In this manner, renewed perceptions and enlightened perspectives may be attained, from which healthier choices can now be made.

5) Making conscious choices and taking responsible actions

Developing authenticity requires consciously choosing personality responses with the intention to reveal best-self characteristics and therefore, an authentic way of being. By making a resolute decision, one can choose not to react with the same negative energies (e.g., emotions) as that which may have been activated by the challenge or stressor. Reacting with negative emotions amounts to allowing someone else to write or create one's life story and outcomes. When we consciously choose ways of thinking, emotions and behaviour in line with the nature of our authentic source, then we can act while taking cognizance of the outcomes (e.g., love, understanding, compassion, kindness) we intend to bring about with particular responses. If we focus on other people's responses, then our focus is on another's actions or omissions and therefore misdirected. One may focus on *where you respond from* (best-self or authentic source), as opposed to *what or who you react to* (person, thing and/or event). Choosing to act from stress emotions will cause moving out of self, while choosing to act from well-being emotions will cause moving into self. Then, by taking responsible actions one can manifest well-being intentions and bring envisioned authentic self into the present. Responsible actions are equated with responses and modes of being that are motivated by well-being emotions and loving intentions, so as to move into best-self. The objective is to act with best-self characteristics, regardless of whether others reveal their best selves or not.

6) Evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards

To summarise, when we inner-act with self, and interact with others and our environment, certain thoughts and emotions may be activated within us. However, as we exchange energy and knowledge with each other, we need to be mindful of how we give back to others. When you evaluate responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour against best-self standards (as presented by best-self characteristics), then you will assess what you feel and think as a result of the chosen response, as well as the effects of your behaviour on those with whom you interact. Therefore, it is the nature and consequences of our responses that will result in our experiences of *being* as authentic or inauthentic. Hence, although we cannot control what others think, feel and do, we can control and evaluate our own intentions with which we respond to others. For example, if we react from a place of anger and our intention is to hurt or harm another, the possibility exists that our actions will likewise harm that person. Not everyone at the receiving end may have such skills as internal locus of control or the quality of positive self-concept, to cope effectively with negative intentions from others. Even if they had, negative emotion and intention do not align with best-self characteristics. If responses and consequences are not congruent with best-self, our need to be authentic have not been met. As a result, one needs to turn within again to do the necessary authenticity work of realigning personality responses with best-self.

Placing the framework for developing authenticity (FDA: figure 6.5) – which represents realignment with best-self – back into the context of it occurring as an ongoing and unfolding process (see figure 6.3), enables us to illustrate the authenticity dynamic in relation to well-being. Hence, figure 6.8 illustrates how developing authenticity, as a novel way of coping, enhances well-being. Therefore, adaptive coping (authentically inspired responses) and enhanced well-being (consequence/outcome), form overall standards against which to measure best-self and therefore authentic being.

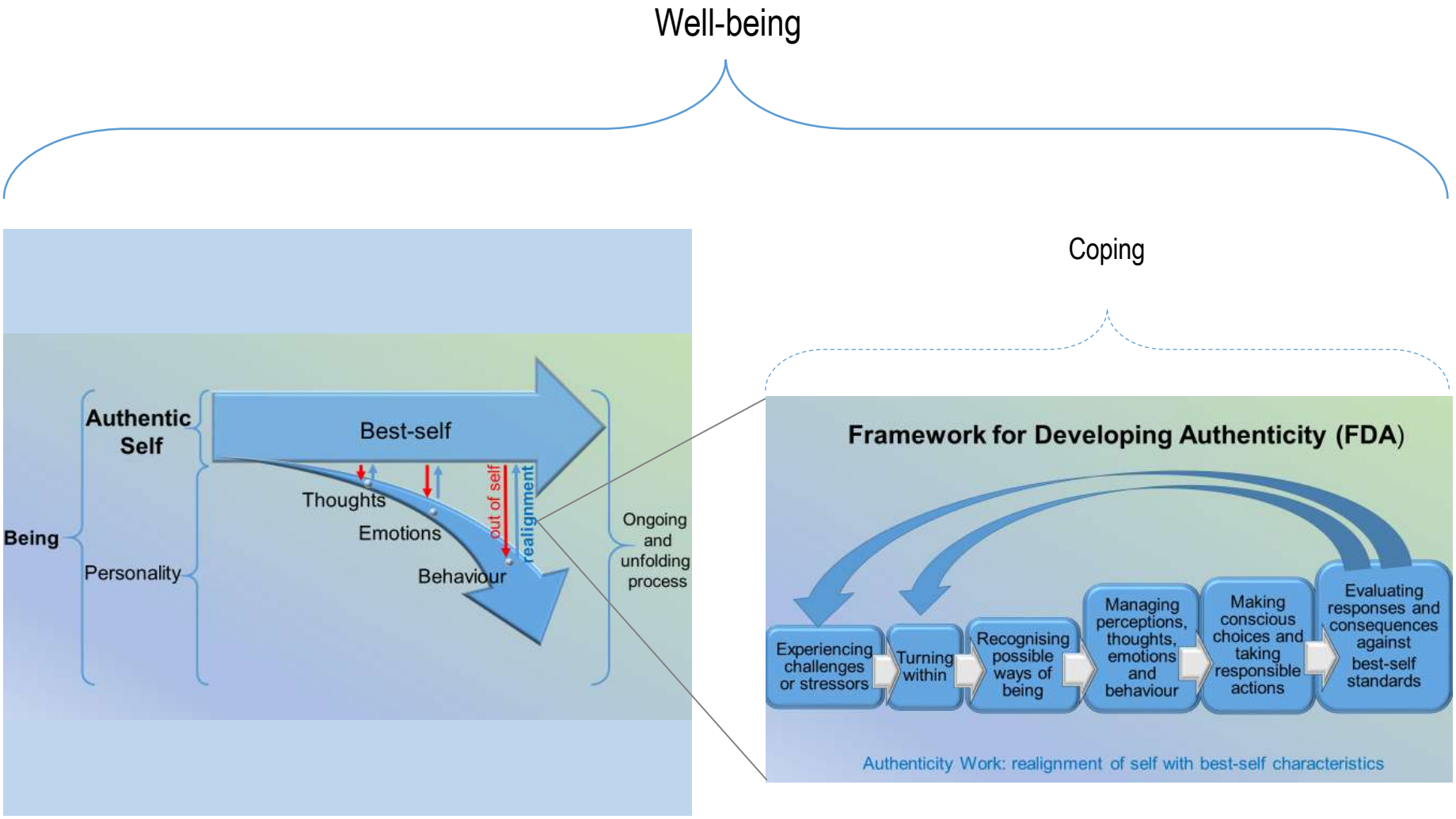


Figure 6.8: Developing authenticity – a novel way of coping to enhance well-being.

6.6 REFLECTION

It was challenging for me to present developing authenticity in a way that honours the complex relationships and interconnectedness between the elements within the process. At times it was also challenging to navigate through the component parts and the whole of the phenomenon. One thing I know for sure: I would not have been able to make sense of participant experiences, had I not been willing to go on my own journey of developing authenticity with them. Sometimes I could not distinguish part from whole or *beginning* from *end*, but I now understand why. When developing authenticity, I do start where I finish and I finish where I start. At the most fundamental level I start out with emotions, thoughts and behaviour. I end up again with those – this time renewed or transformed along best-self. More accurately, I return to my pure and original nature, as Suzuki (2010b) prefers to describe it.

I ponder on one's ability to develop authenticity, should the best-self characteristics be present or absent in a person. For example, what if persons are not naturally optimistic in their orientation to life or, is not inherently spiritual, or denies the presence of a higher power? Will they by implication not be able to attain authenticity? I assert that, just as optimism is something that can be cultivated so as to have *more* of it (Peterson, 2000), so too spirituality (Mohan & Uys, 2006; Van der Walt, 2018) or spiritual intelligence may be raised or developed (Sisk, 2016), if one so chooses. Further, optimism in itself relates to other beneficial characteristics such as perseverance, happiness, health and achievement (Peterson, 2000). I opine that, if individuals do not want to develop in one way or the other, they either do not want to, or they do not know how. Further, best-self involves showing *increasing* occurrences of thoughts, feelings and actions of self when at its best (Roberts et al., 2005).

With regard to not being inherently spiritual, Hiles (2002) posits that aspects of a spiritual nature are inevitable parts of understanding authentic human existence. Vaughan (2002) states that traits associated with spiritual intelligence such as generosity and kindness, may also be displayed by individuals who do not think of themselves as *particularly* spiritual. Nonetheless, she believes the potential to

develop spiritual intelligence – as with other capacities – is within everyone, but that these develop when we give them attention. Valverde (2016, p. 305) states that human beings have a spiritual dimension, but various “levels of consciousness”. I would then contend that, denying spiritual aspects may be a matter of not yet being awake to all aspects of one’s being, or lacking mindfulness. Personally, it is difficult for me to entertain concepts of *beyond self*, if there is nothing I believe to be *beyond* self. Similarly, how do I transcend, if there is nothing I believe I can transcend to? In this study I linked authenticity to best-self, and best-self to participants did not include such aspects as pessimism or not being spiritual. However, such aspects certainly had important parts to play in their ultimate need to move back toward authentic being. In addition, this study does assume that all possibilities of being do exist within and that the possibility manifested by a person is a matter of choice – whether chosen consciously or unconsciously.

On the other hand, best-self emotions, for example, were the same in relation to authentic self, the nature and/or needs of the soul and even in participants’ *likeness* to their God. Thus, it would seem that if a person is willing to develop best-self, and does not identify with a higher power, they should be able to develop authentic self as well. Nonetheless, developing authenticity in this study turned out to be more a renewal of what already is – a realignment with what has always been. I posit that we are born authentic beings – with personality aspects and best-self fully aligned. Then, “life happens” and I may move out of self. My life’s journey then becomes one of moving back into the self, and it is one I am called to should I intend to manifest the best version of self again. My opportunities to move back into self are presented to me with each person I encounter. However, I may be so busy with whatever that I cannot recognise my own need for development being mirrored during my interactions with others. Hence, as part of this chapter’s reflection I have applied the framework to assess my authenticity process as experienced on a particular day (Journal extract 6.3):

Journal extract 6.3:

- ✓ The **challenge or stressor** arose from something that someone said to me. I leave the situation and the person only with the response that I take note of what has been said. However, my being did feel unsettled. At this stage I cannot name the specific emotions or feelings yet, just that I feel unsettled.
- ✓ Upon **turning within,** I found a slight self-reproach (negative emotional impact nonetheless). The emotions experienced are negative ones – including a combination of denial, shame and guilt – and therefore I recognise that my underlying thinking and intention(s) are not aligned with best-self.
- ✓ I **recognise possible ways of being**: I see that I am being inauthentic, but I am aware that being authentic does exist as a possibility for me as well.
- ✓ I then take some time to **manage** my **perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour**. I consider perceptions that may prevent me from seeing the event as an opportunity for moving into self. The initial responses within are the following: shame, because I could see my developmental area(s) being mirrored by the other; difficulty forgiving myself for past "mistakes"; trying to justify or excuse my own actions by focusing on another's flaws. Hence, emotions include denial, guilt, blame and shame. Underlying perceptions therefore stem from considering the "person" (as opposed to the bigger lesson) – defending my inauthenticity, judging the other by having an attitude of "but you do it too". I alter my perception(s) by redirecting my focus from the person to my own self. In short, I develop best-self characteristics required for the purpose of realigning my responses with best-self. I adopt a healthier perspective by viewing the person as an instrument presenting my opportunity to move into best-self.
- ✓ With my new perspective I **make a conscious choice** to adopt energies of honesty, thankfulness, love, forgiveness, non-judgment and acceptance, instead of emotions initially activated. I **take responsible actions** – responding from these well-being emotions and attitudes, so as to create similar outcomes in my life.
- ✓ Finally, I **evaluate responses and consequences against best-self standards**. How I now think, feel, and respond are characteristic of best-self, and related consequences for self and others is that of well-being, indicating that my personality is aligned with my authentic self.

Hence, during this research I continuously had to manage my own emotions, perceptions and presuppositions, so as to be open to what the data had to reveal. When I felt *stuck* in my interpretations I often felt a definite need to *empty* my own self and sometimes intuitively by attending Confession – the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (Catholic Church, 2005). This experience reminds me of Suzuki's (2010b, p. 80) descriptions of a calm mind, through terms such as "emptiness" and

"original mind". As a result of carrying out this research, I had a realisation with my last Confession: that I had returned to my best or authentic self during Confession. Soon afterward, I pondered on how this renewal could have happened for me within that context (Journal extract 6.4):

Journal extract 6.4:

Confession is also known as the Sacrament of Conversion – a continuous call to turn back to God – comprising contrition, confession, satisfaction, and absolution (Catholic Church, 2005). Accordingly, each element involves certain characteristics described next and that are comparable to the FDA's steps as follows:

Conflict arises within, when my nature (e.g., sinful/heavy heart/contrary to best-self) differs from that of my higher power (step one: challenge or stressor). Contrition and confession require soul-searching (step two: turning within), and acknowledging sins (step three: recognising possible ways of being) respectively. I also recognise the possibility of God's nature as a mode of being. Confession involves making a resolute intention to sin no more in the future (step five, e.g., intention to respond from best-self). It requires hope, and trusting God to help one toward this intention. Satisfaction entails doing penance (e.g., prayer), and being released from having to pay for my sinfulness (equates negative personality responses and related consequences). This element may be achieved by adopting a perspective that I have been cleansed by Christ who died to pay for my wrongdoings (equates step four). When I believe in God's divine mercy and forgiveness, and accept it, I can let go of that which is contrary to best-self (e.g., guilt over not having reflected His likeness), so that I can return to my authentic nature. During absolution I experience forgiveness, related feelings and ways of thinking against which to evaluate self (step six): upon walking out of the confessional my mode of being feels blissful, "light", renewed, and as if all is well.

Atonement and redemption are associated with personal growth and EWB (Bauer et al., 2008). Furthermore, I also experienced my realignment or renewal process as *accelerated*. I opine this was so because the confessional context creates for me conditions such as accepting self without judgement, facilitates my being honest and non-defensive, reconnecting with my higher power and viewing my best-self from a spiritual identity perspective. This spiritual experience enriches my practice, both personally and professionally. It brings to mind the importance of conditions required to bring about constructive change in personality, which apply in any circumstance whether considered *psychotherapy* or not (Rogers, 1957; Ryback, 2011). Accordingly, positive change in personality occurs only in a relationship: where the

client is anxious or vulnerable, the therapist is truly himself or herself, has unconditional positive regard and empathy for the client and the client perceives the therapist as empathic. Rogers' (1957) *true self* includes negative emotions or attitudes on the part of the therapist. I situated authentic self within the context of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and best-self (Roberts et al., 2005), in which one's self-concept is integrated with spiritual experiences (Poll & Smith, 2003). Nonetheless, I have experienced that over-familiarity may diminish my awareness of the authenticity dynamic. This attitude may cause me not to reveal as much empathy to someone more familiar to me (e.g., family member or colleague), as I would a stranger (e.g., clients). Then I can often see (e.g., step six: evaluation) where I could have revealed more love or empathy – more of best-self – especially toward those closest to me (e.g., taking them for granted). My *being* needs to reveal its best-self in both my private and professional relationships, and developing authenticity in one of these is of benefit to its unfolding in the other.

6.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the framework for developing authenticity was developed, based on the research findings. As is evident, the framework for developing authenticity proposes a reasonable amount of self-regulation and introspection, both of which can be exhausting. Self-regulation, as an important aspect of developing authenticity (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017), contributes to enhanced well-being when we interact (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Within the context of women in a male-dominated work environment, it can be expected that women may be required to do a lot more self-regulation and introspection in order to develop authenticity under related challenges or stressors. Nonetheless, individuals are responsible for developing themselves first toward best-self, since Strazdins and Broom (2004) state that attending to the emotional needs of others (e.g., as in emotional work) weaken women's well-being. This is because when we compare ourselves with everything, we move toward inauthentic being (Heidegger, 1953/2010); so do taking over another's responsibilities (Kreber et al., 2007) and lacking ownership for my own in becoming authentic (Dewar, 2016). If I am hoping, waiting or insisting that someone else should think, feel and behave in a way so I can think and feel good about myself,

then I am off the mark with regard to developing my own authenticity. The best thing I can do to prevent getting stuck in an unhealthy emotional space and mind set, is to remove the other person's face or physical body from the equation – as well as any expectations I may have of him or her to be different. If I do not, it is likely that I will take things personally and pay attention to information obtained through just the five senses, which may not be furthering to my developing authenticity. The other person's role was fulfilled the moment I could recognise my own developmental opportunities being reflected to me by my own *being*, as a result of interacting with him or her. My role is to realign *my* personality responses with best-self when required, to reveal my authentic self.

Chapter Seven follows, presenting the precis, implications and recommendations. The application of findings to the domains of employee and organisational well-being, and to career counselling and guidance are also discussed.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PRECIS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was carried out in a male-dominated work environment, particularly, in law enforcement. The research involved a sample comprising female police officers and traffic officers in the South African context. Women need to acquire the skills involved in developing authenticity as it affects their well-being in the place of work – and more so in a traditionally male-dominated work environment. I became interested in the research topic given my background in law enforcement, the challenges and stressors I had to face as a woman, and related threats to my well-being. That is also the context within which my academic interest in developing authenticity was generated. However, it has been an interest within me ever since I can remember. It amazes me how we are unique yet the same, how we have different physical bodies but are connected through mind and soul, how within me there is a bigger-than-me, and the fascinating role that personality responses play in developing authenticity.

This chapter summarises the research, the resultant conclusions made and is meant to stimulate deeper thinking about the findings and its implications (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). I commence with the precis – summarising the various thesis chapters and view how each contributed to me reaching the research objective(s). Thereafter I present conclusions based on the findings. As part of critically discussing the contributions and implications, the application of findings to the domains of employee and organisational well-being, and career counselling and guidance are then discussed. I make various recommendations, and close with a final reflection on this doctorate journey.

7.2 PRECIS – TOWARD ACHIEVING THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE(S)

Chapter One served to orient the research in terms of its rationale and significance. With more and more women entering a male-dominated work environment, and the

associated challenges they face, the need also arise for novel ways to address how they cope and maintain their well-being. The research problem was rooted in the need to understand how women in law enforcement construct their developing authenticity, as an aspect of coping and maintaining their well-being. The primary aim of this study was to construct a framework for developing authenticity, by exploring women's experiences of authenticity and how these relate to their well-being. The study was further intended to advance the concept of authenticity in the study of well-being in the discipline of I/O psychology. I also set out to make a methodological contribution, by applying hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches in an integrative and novel way. Chapter One enabled me to achieve the research objectives by providing an operational map in terms of the research approach that was required to satisfy the research question. This chapter also aided in anticipating outcomes that added to the contributions of the study. Awareness of my perspectives and assumptions with which I entered the study further helped me to answer the research question, by directing my way of thinking about the research phenomenon.

Chapter Two comprised the literature review, which I presented by considering theoretical perspectives from overall orienting lenses to construct relationships. The literature review aided in the attainment of the research objectives by enabling me to further clarify my assumptions, to link these to its related theoretical foundations, which also informed the choice of methodological approaches (Trafford & Leshem, 2008). This study aimed to fill the gap in research through its conceptualisation of authenticity as core to well-being, and by fulfilling the need to understand how women in law enforcement cope with the challenges to their well-being in that environment. The theoretical perspectives enabled me to conceptualise the primary constructs of authenticity, coping and well-being, which transpired as such since authenticity was explored as a novel coping mechanism for enhancing women's well-being. The literature reviewed also produced related theoretical constructs, which allowed for a better understanding of interconnectedness throughout the primary constructs. All of these constructs I viewed within the contexts of the chosen metatheoretical lenses. This feature was essential in helping me to understand

authenticity both within context and in relation to its constituent parts, as well as to make sense of the research findings.

In **Chapter Three** I dealt with the research methodology, as informed by the theoretical perspectives alluded to above. The methodology directed me in choosing the strategies necessary (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006) to satisfy the research question and attain the research objective(s). Data involved required subjective understanding, but it was also necessary to look for the true objective nature of phenomena beneath the subjective experience (Kafle, 2011). In addition, deeper understanding of the research topic necessitated the inclusion of my preunderstandings, experiences and expectations (Kafle, 2011), as well as the use of my personal transformation as data (Anderson, 2015). Hence, integrating the hermeneutic phenomenological (Benner, 2008) and transpersonal approaches (Anderson, 2015) in my methodological framework helped me to adequately collect, analyse and synthesise the type of data involved in a phenomenon such as developing authenticity. In the contributions section I elaborate on the way in which the research methodology further enabled me to reach the objectives of this research.

Chapter Four presented the research design as being qualitative, which helped me to achieve the research objectives, as the process required had to be holistic and produce contextual information (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The design enabled me to employ qualitative research methods required to study the behaviour of participants as it happened naturally, to consider their situational aspects, multiple perspectives and to collect data from them as primary sources (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Being interested in their understanding and meaning ascribed to experiences (Yin, 2011), I could understand these better through their detailed rich narratives, and it was possible to focus on the process of why and how their actions took place (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Since the research design denotes how the phenomenon was studied practically (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006), I recall that Heidegger explained how existential truth is made known when people try to understand each other, while also opening up themselves to be understood (DuBose, 2010a). Hence, for me to understand how women develop authenticity, it

was necessary to understand the phenomenon in myself, and to be open to the transformation I may undergo in the process, as a result. This involvement means that my sample size was not twelve, but thirteen – me being the additional unit of analysis. Therefore, I integrated hermeneutic phenomenology and the transpersonal research approach to include my personal transformation in the collection of data, in analysis as well as interpretation. What I term *integration* equates Anderson's (2015) suggestion that qualitative research methods must be modified (to incorporate the researcher's personal transformation as data), otherwise even these fall short when having to study complex topics of extensive nature.

In **Chapter Five** I presented the research findings – integrating participant experiences, literature and interpretations. Although I integrated the approaches as described above, here I draw particular attention to the influence of the hermeneutic phenomenological approach on findings and interpretations. From the narrative interview data and self-reflection, it transpired that potential agents for moving the self away from best-self take the form of certain challenges and stressors. Women in this study experienced these to be related to interpersonal differences and conflict potential, the work context itself and work-life imbalance. Their resultant thoughts, emotions and behaviour serve as *into self* and *out of self* responses, which serve as indictors of the need to develop authenticity. This need arises when responses are not aligned with best-self. Authenticity work or realignment of self with best-self characteristics must then take place, to satisfy their inherent need to be their best selves. This realignment involves becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics, reconnecting to a higher power, returning to a more optimistic orientation to life, making a meaningful contribution and practising responsible self-expression. Hence, this chapter contributed to me achieving the study objectives by synthesising the research question with data from literature and other methods (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

In **Chapter Six** I created and presented the framework for developing authenticity. Although the use of the transpersonal approach was continuous throughout the research, this chapter gave particular attention to its influence on findings and interpretations. The findings in the previous chapter were further interpreted by

viewing everything again within the context of an ongoing and unfolding process. The phenomenon could only be understood in relation to its parts, and proper understanding required constant movement between the entire phenomenon and its components (Kelly, 2006c). The research question is fulfilled, in that the framework provides a pathway on how to develop authenticity, for the purpose of enhancing well-being. Based on the findings and related understandings obtained, I further interpreted the process of developing authenticity to occur as described next. Individuals experience challenges or stressors in their work and life. These are stimuli that may activate certain personality responses within them – thoughts, emotions and behaviour – with the potential to have them move into self or out of self. In the case of the latter, individuals need to turn within to reach certain awareness, before they react to what have been activated within. When they are able to recognise possible ways of being, they can begin to effectively manage perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Therefore, they are better able to make conscious choices and take responsible actions. When developing authenticity, one learns the importance of evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards. If responses and consequences are not aligned with best-self, individuals must turn within again and do the authenticity work required to realign personality responses with best-self.

Chapter Seven provides thoughts in conclusion to the study, elaborated on next. It focusses on the authenticity work involved when developing authenticity and the related contributions to coping and well-being, which resulted from the study.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

With this research I intended to explore how women in a traditionally male-dominated work context such as law enforcement develop authenticity in maintaining their well-being. The related research problem arose from the need for novel ways to address how women cope and maintain their well-being, which resulted from an increase of women into a traditionally male-dominated work setting and the particular well-being challenges they experience therein. The ultimate research objective was to produce a framework for developing authenticity, which is

intended to enhance their well-being in the place of work. I drew experiences from the law enforcement categories of police officers and traffic officers, from South Africa's Western Cape province. The research approaches chosen and the rationale behind the approaches were explained in the previous section, so were the findings and the framework.

However, conclusions are not reproductions of research findings, but involve abstraction on a higher level in which the significance of findings are expanded on (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The conclusions made concerning developing authenticity are presented as follows:

7.3.1 Developing authenticity is a relational process activated by challenges or stressors

The process of developing authenticity occurs within a relational space (Glavas, 2016; Kernis & Goldman, 2006) and may be set into motion when individuals experience challenges or stressors. These may activate within them certain personality responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour, each having the potential to either move one into self or out of self. In the authenticity dynamic the significant motivation is to reveal and have an authentic being. The need to develop authenticity arises as we inner-act and interact with self and the world, when responses activated within are negative or stressful and therefore not in line with best-self. I conclude that developing authenticity is a relational process that may be activated when experiencing challenges or stressors. Hence, the related negative thoughts, emotions and behaviour are all necessary and valuable in ultimately calling us back toward authentic being. Participants need to turn within to reach this awareness and think clearly, before they react to what has been activated within. Hence, a habit that needs to be cultivated if we are to develop authenticity, is to become conscious of the authenticity dynamic before we react to challenges or stressors. When we reach this awareness we can begin to do the necessary authenticity work required to move toward best-self again.

7.3.2 Developing authenticity facilitates our interconnectedness, also as spiritual beings

The process of developing authenticity occurs not only within our relationships with the self and other people, but also with a higher power. We are connected to each other through the significant way in which we mirror each other's authenticity related developmental areas – in what we can learn about our own authenticity needs, when we interact. I see this connection most clearly by recalling that emotions are energy in motion (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012), and that we exchange energy and information via our minds when we interact (Siegel, 2012). I identify with these as "real" when I think about how we can feel hurt or happiness as a result of another's opinion, joy or jealousy at another's achievement, or compassion at another's situation. I conclude that the ability of stimuli to activate certain responses within us, is in itself evidence of our connections with each other. Developing authenticity is a process that for women in this study, occurs within the context of them being part of something bigger than and beyond the self. From a spiritual perspective to developing authenticity, when spiritual needs are not being met (as when not responding with love to people and events), individuals are not being their best selves, so that the need for developing authenticity is activated.

The spiritual meaning that individuals attach to law enforcement stems from a belief system that their services affect their communities in meaningful ways, and that they contribute to the wellness of one another (Arndt & Davis, 2011). Authenticity and spirituality are linked (Kilcup, 2016), both leading to love and wholeness and to showing concern for the well-being of all and the world (Vaughan, 2002). We connect to our higher power when we tap into it for strength or energy. I conclude that we are connected to each other also by means of our higher power, for what our *beings* need to exchange as energy with others, are exactly what we derive from a higher power, yet from within the self. I now know for certain that the satisfaction of emotional needs (i.e., to have emotions aligned with best-self and hence, to experience well-being emotions) is crucial within the authenticity dynamic, whether one identifies with a higher power or not.

Nonetheless, one should remember that “industrial and organisational psychology (IOP) is *psychology”* (Strümpfer, 2007, p. 1). We should remember that psychology may be understood as a science of the soul (Corbett, 2010), and that self *is* soul (Moreland, 1998). I remember being sold on pursuing I/O psychology, because solving problems at work requires that we remember and cherish the human element, which we so often neglect at work. Since developing authenticity has been linked very strongly to spirituality in this study, I can now conclude that we should not neglect the spiritual element of being human as it pertains to best-self. When developing authenticity, these intertwine to contribute to things such as enhanced performance, coping and well-being in our work lives. What individuals do internally, on cognitive and emotional levels, is to develop the best-self characteristics and related skills that transpired.

7.3.3 Best-self characteristics interact to facilitate adaptive coping while developing authenticity

Where women in this study were not able to give expression to best-self or fulfil work of meaning to them in their careers, it affected their well-being negatively. Poorer well-being had related negative organisational consequences such as absenteeism. Along this journey, when individuals perhaps reached a point of surrender to their higher power, such experience may be viewed as being at your lowest in terms of the ability to cope. Mindfulness is an aspect of authenticity, through its facilitation of adaptation (Carson & Langer, 2006) and enhanced objectivity (Bonthuys et al., 2017). Hence, depending on where a person is at along the authentic developmental journey, surrendering may be viewed as a mindfulness skill such as “accepting without judgement” as described by Baer et al. (2004, p. 194). Accordingly, one is able to allow an experience to be, without evaluating it or trying to change it – displaying adaptive coping. Either way, the act of connecting to a higher power may facilitate coping (Jacobs & Van Niekerk, 2017; Mohan & Uys, 2006). I conclude that coping is made possible within the process of developing authenticity by deriving renewed strength and energy when reconnecting with your higher power, or with the best parts of self.

I further conclude that the trust one has in a higher power is in effect a trust in best-self, which can provide a person with internal locus of control. This conclusion illustrates how the best-self characteristics and associated skills also influence the development of each other within the authenticity dynamic. In this case the connection illustrated is the one between *tapping into a source of strength and energy* and *internal locus of control.* This skill of internal locus of control occurred under *managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour* – during which a considerable part of the critical authenticity work takes place. An example of managing one's perceptions is by employing *spiritual intelligence*, which transpired also under the best-self characteristic of *viewing best-self from a spiritual identity perspective.* When we transform our adjustment and coping responses (Barnard et al., 2016) by developing and employing our authentic and spiritual faculties, I conclude this quality may be viewed as transpersonal coping. When employing spiritual intelligence, one is able to understand how perception, belief and behaviour are interrelated, to take responsibility for all of these and to view things from many different perspectives (Vaughan, 2002). At the same time, responsibility has universal worth as an authenticity characteristic, which also links *internal locus of control* (Koydemir et al., 2018) and *practising responsible self-expression* as best-self characteristics. While practising these enhances one's authenticity, Kreber et al. (2007) explained that we diminish another's authenticity when we take over for that person his or her responsibility or possibility. I conclude that if we manipulate others into how we want them to be, hoping that this effort will make us feel well, we act contrary to best-self and diminish authenticity in both self and others.

7.3.4 Developing authenticity is a cyclical process of returning to best-self and well-being

Armed with clarity of thought and authentically inspired multiple perspectives, one can make conscious choices and take responsible actions, to rather manifest consequences associated with authenticity and well-being. It is then necessary to evaluate responses and consequences against best-self standards. If responses and consequences are not in line with best-self, individuals must turn within again and do the authenticity work required to realign personality responses with best-self.

I conclude that developing authenticity is a cyclical process – in how best-self characteristics influence each other, how we start with personality responses and return to renewed responses, turning back to authentic being and to well-being, realigning with a higher power, and so forth. Mahatma Gandhi believed in being the change that you want to see. Zukav (2014) suggests becoming authentic entails contributing to the world that which we want to experience. For example, if we need love or recognition, we must first give these to others (Valverde, 2016). Similarly, Cook and Geldenhuys (2018) state that the positive emotions sparked by love induce likewise qualities in both the giver and the receiver, which transform self and others. Heidegger posits that all possible modes of being already exist within (Heidegger, 1953/1996) and that we already are authentic self (Padgett, 2007). Hence, metatheoretical and philosophical assumptions of this study reflect the findings and vice versa – individuals who develop authenticity return to who they have always been. By implication, who they have always been has a loving, spiritual or soulful nature also.

7.3.5 The authenticity-coping link is a valuable approach to well-being

While studying spiritual intelligence, Kilcup (2016) found that participants who considered themselves Agnostic and Atheist did reveal intense spiritual experiences. Hence, espousing (in part) a social constructionist epistemology that recognises multiple truths (Lehman et al., 2018), I posit that developing authenticity is not a “religious thing”, but “spiritual thing”. There are so many people I admire for their ways of being who belong to a religion different to my own, or who do not even claim any particular religion at all. God by His very nature *is* love, with love’s related qualities such as patience and kindness (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). The philosophical foundations of this study include that human beings are inherently good (Bergh, 2009c), while authentic being is an existential possibility for all (Heidegger, 1953/2010). Therefore, for people who have never had a transpersonal experience or do not believe in a higher power, it may be possible to activate the love within by some other means. They may tap into universal aspects of authentic being, for example, by realigning with what is loving, good, not harmful and meaningful within their particular belief systems. Also, a near death experience or other impactful

events may certainly activate within one such authentic energies as a renewed appreciation for life and love. Nonetheless, I can conclude that the authenticity-coping link is indeed a valuable approach to well-being.

7.3.6 Reflection on findings and conclusions

Below, I connect the findings to the conclusions and illustrate the interconnectedness between components (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008), by doing final reflection (table 7.1). I include the core themes as constructed in Chapter Five and give particular attention to the elements that form the framework for developing authenticity as produced in Chapter Six – bringing together what transpired from the hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approach.

Table 7.1: Final reflection on findings and conclusions

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS
POTENTIAL AGENTS FOR MOVING THE SELF AWAY FROM BEST-SELF	Challenges or stressors in the male-dominated work environment of law enforcement serve as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self.
INDICATORS OF THE NEED TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY	The need to develop authenticity occurs within a relational space – concurrently in relation to self, others and a higher power. The self has the need for its *being* to be authentic – to think, feel and behave in line with best-self. This need arises when a person adopts ways of responding that are contrary to best-self. Positive emotions, amongst others, are characteristic of best-self. Since authentic being is associated with well-being, individuals' personality responses (i.e., thoughts, emotions and behaviour) – when these are contrary to best-self – will indicate the need to develop authenticity. Such responses and its effects indicate moving out of self, which negatively impact well-being. Since well-being is affected in this way, it also affects the ability to cope (Danna & Griffin, 1999) effectively with challenges or stressors.
REALIGNING SELF WITH BEST-SELF CHARACTERISTICS	Satisfying the need to be one's best-self requires adaptive coping and therefore that one develops authenticity, so as to move into self again. Developing authenticity involves authenticity work, meaning that individuals intentionally develop and employ best-self characteristics and associated skills in an ongoing process, so as to reveal authentic being. The need to be authentic equates the need to respond to self and to others with best-self characteristics and associated skills. Responding

	with characteristics opposite to best-self (e.g., not being mindful, with negative emotions) amounts to maladaptive coping. In the context of developing authenticity, maladaptive coping involves personality responses that play a role in the overall authenticity dynamic (as indicators of the need to develop authenticity), but that do not ultimately lead to realigning self with best-self.
DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY IS AN ONGOING AND UNFOLDING PROCESS: *Experiencing challenges or stressors*	Since challenges or stressors form part of our interactions with others and the world, these continuously activate responses within that have the potential of moving us away from best-self. Challenges or stressors challenge our coping resources/human responses – the behavioural and cognitive efforts with which internal and external demands are managed (Lazarus, 1993) and our continuous emotional processes (Ryan et al., 2014).
Turning within	Negative or stress emotions arise from the conflict (Lazarus, 1993) between the needs and expectations of an untransformed personality, and the needs of best-self and/or soul. Developing authenticity requires turning within so as to become mindful of the needs of best or authentic self, to become mindful of the nature of the personality responses activated within, and of how responses mirror one's authentic developmental areas as well as one's progress along this process. Awareness of the mirror effect in developing authenticity helps one to become mindful of personality responses as indictors of the need to develop authenticity, so as not to mindlessly accept negative responses as ultimate ways of being. We respond according to our level of awareness at any given time.
Recognising possible ways of being	Individuals become mindful that various ways of being are possible, which are broadly authentic and inauthentic. Respectively, well-being emotions and stress emotions are associated with these ways of being. Positive emotions are part of the best-self characteristics, which denote possible ways of being (authentic ones) as well. Similarly, all emotions exist as possibilities with which to respond to challenges or stressors, but self inherently needs for its way of being to be rooted in its authentic source. Knowledge or understanding of the authenticity dynamic in itself helps one to take ownership and control of responses and ways of being.
Managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour	Developing authenticity requires effectively managing these personality responses. This *step* is where much of the authenticity work takes place, although the best-self characteristics and its associated skills find expression throughout the process. Of critical importance is that one must intentionally adjust aspects of thinking, emotions and behaviour – with each other, but also with their envisaged outcomes (such as authentic being and well-being). As an example, in practice I have found that persons may initially associate something like revenge with feeling good. As they enhance their awareness of

	authentic needs and expectations, the likely negative outcomes and harmful consequences for self and others bring about different perspectives. With emotion being a mental state (Quigley et al., 2014), its realignment with best-self therefore involves renewal of the mind (and thoughts). A valuable perspective resides within their spiritual identities. This perspective allows one to link authentic needs to being like one's higher power, while authentic expectations hold nobody but the self accountable for what one creates along the authentic journey. When we broaden our perspectives we are able to consider more responsible and adaptive ways of responding to challenges or stressors.
Making conscious choices and taking responsible actions	Enhanced awareness must be accompanied by doing what needs to be done to reveal authentic being. This "doing" already started with *turning within*, and the *steps* in the process are valuable toward enhanced awareness of the authenticity dynamic – in helping one to make sense of the process in one's mind. Making conscious choices means being aware of possible consequences and how these relate to moving into self or out of self, when making one's decisions. Hence, intentions must also align with the envisioned authentic being. Responsible action means carrying out the choice that leads to moving into self and brings about related consequences such as well-being.
Evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards	Since developing authenticity entails the realignment of self with best-self, the best-self characteristics also form the standards against which responses and consequences are evaluated. This notion validates that we return to the authentic being that we have always been (cyclical process), but now revealed through our intention to be or reveal our authentic selves. I conclude that positive emotions are particularly important in developing and evaluating authentic being, since its energies indicate that our authentic needs and expectations have been met within the authenticity dynamic. However, authentic being is not something that we perfect, so that all other possible ways of being suddenly disappear. Hence, we are continuously presented with opportunities to choose to respond with best-self characteristics or not, so that developing authenticity is an ongoing and unfolding process. The choice remains ours, but the related consequences remain ours as well.

7.4 CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

My primary aim with this research was to construct a framework for developing authenticity, for the purpose of enhancing women's well-being in a male-dominated work environment – particularly, law enforcement. This section provides

contributions and implications of this study at the theoretical, practical as well as methodological levels.

7.4.1 Theoretical level

Theoretically, there seems to be no clear definition on what authenticity is. Cooper et al. (2005) support the development of interventions to bring about developing authenticity. However, they opined it would be premature to design such interventions without first taking steps to define, measure and subject the particular construct – in their case, authentic leadership – to rigorous research. In this study I did not explore authenticity specifically in relation to leadership. Nonetheless, I similarly opine it would be premature to create a framework for developing authenticity without first thoroughly conceptualising authenticity. Theoretically, this study contributed through generating theory and producing a framework that provide a high level integrative perspective on conceptualising authenticity from a well-being perspective. The contribution includes various aspects in the authenticity phenomenon that highlight the fact that authenticity is not just a concept but a dynamic phenomenon, which involves authenticity work as described earlier.

I achieved the primary objective of developing the framework, by exploring participants' experiences of authenticity in a male-dominated work environment (law enforcement) and how these relate to their well-being. To do so I aligned myself with particular philosophical foundations or theoretical frameworks within which to carry out the research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). I used Martin Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology and the transpersonal approach according to Anderson (2015), to place the research process in context and to ground its reasoning and criteria (Crotty, 1998). To obtain the required data from which to make the theoretical contribution, I used narrative interviews (for participants), as well as self-data (from researcher). Interview questions were organised in a temporal manner, to build on each other and to uncover the thinking that underlines the relationship of experiences within stories (Ayres, 2008). Structuring of the interview questions was also influenced by a literature summary (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), using

corresponding elements from the primary constructs of authenticity, coping and well-being.

The overall research question necessitated the use of literature from overarching perspectives to more specific constructs and its use throughout the research process. The literature review and philosophical stance contributed to how I made sense of data, and the data analysis process is discussed under the methodological contribution. As one of the secondary objectives, I also had to advance the concept of authenticity in the study of well-being within I/O psychology. I achieved this objective in numerous ways, as reflected by the findings and in having created a framework for developing authenticity. Theoretical links were established between authenticity, coping and well-being, and supported through this empirical research. Conceptual frameworks developed naturally from theoretical perspectives, providing clarification of research intentions and objectives (Trafford & Leshem, 2008).

Theoretically the findings imply a new conceptualisation of authenticity from a well-being perspective. A foundation is provided for understanding the phenomenon from the perspectives of women in the male-dominated work environment of law enforcement. Authenticity is viewed as an individual difference construct formed by an ongoing process of the realignment of thoughts, emotions and behaviour with best-self. This research contributed an in-depth understanding of developing authenticity as a process in which challenges and stressors in the work environment, may be viewed as potential agents for moving the self away from best-self. Such understanding implies a healthier perspective from which to view challenges or stressors presented to women in a male-dominated work environment. Likewise, personality responses of thoughts, emotions and behaviour are viewed as indicators of the need to develop authenticity. This view implies a perspective that allows for a healthier relationship with all aspects of the self – to appreciate all emotions and thoughts as valuable and as having an important purpose in our development toward best and authentic self.

The study makes a contribution to our perceptions of authenticity and how authenticity is about becoming (or returning to) your best-self. Developing

authenticity involves doing authenticity work – employing best-self characteristics to guide adaptive and *into self* responses and to manifest corresponding consequences such as well-being. In this manner developing authenticity brings about well-being by helping individuals to adjust well to challenges (May, 2009), to cope better with work stress (Cummings & Worley, 2005), to function optimally, and to reach organisational goals (May, 2009). Developing authenticity also facilitates career adjustment and career adaptability (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Findings further strengthened the significant connection between authenticity and spirituality, which implies that well-being may be enhanced through adjustment and coping by means of developing the spiritual component of authentic self.

7.4.2 Practical level

Practical contributions reside in the need for policy and for training – especially for women in law enforcement. Individuals may be aware of the significance of authenticity in work and in life, but they may not necessarily be able to articulate or explain exactly what is required to develop authenticity. An implication is that important best-self characteristics and associated skills may not be valued as part of human resources development and/or management. Various challenges and stressors in the workplace may cause women in this study to divert from their best-self, which may influence their well-being and performance negatively. Hence, policies and practices are needed to improve employee and organisational effectiveness within the organisational strategy, to support women's development and goal achievement (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2011).

Developing authenticity is about "human being" and "being human". Therefore, development of this nature fits naturally into workplace activities that focus on things such as realising best potentials, enhancing effectiveness, performance and well-being. For example, developing authenticity naturally fits into policies for leadership and management, aimed at providing development, support and attending to the unique needs of individuals, while being linked to particular responsibilities and outcomes. Aspects such as authentic leadership (Baron & Parent, 2015) and conflict management for women may be developed within a training context (Mayer et al.,

2018). Research findings may be applied in organisations and industry (Strümpfer, 2007) to understand the conduct of people in the workplace (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011), but also in general. The framework may be applied in sub-disciplines of I/O psychology, such as employee and organisational well-being as well as career counselling and guidance, to enhance employees' coping capacity and well-being. In relation to developing authenticity, the two sub-disciplines come together through the role that best-self plays in each (figure 7.2):

Figure 7.1: The role of developing authenticity in sub-disciplines of I/O psychology.

Therefore, practical implications include that women should be empowered toward authenticity in their world of work, by helping them to acquire the best-self characteristics needed for developing authenticity. Such empowerment can also be done by applying the findings and the framework in well-being, counselling and coaching as described next.

7.4.2.1 Employee and organisational well-being

Women may be empowered by helping them to deal with the challenges or stressors (see Chapter Six, table 6.1) in their male-dominated work environment. Developing

the positive resources of best-self characteristics may help women deal with others and with their environment in adaptive ways, so as to effectively cope with the emotional challenges in careers and life. This development will help manifest the outcomes envisioned in the theoretical implications as described, together with such outcomes as improved service, reduced absenteeism and enhanced productivity and well-being. Developing authenticity may help women to give expression to the best of self, in a service that correspondingly requires what their unique beings have to offer. As a result, they are happy at work. In the current study, authenticity in itself enables individuals to make conscious choices and take responsible actions. It also helps them to reduce worries given their practise of best-self characteristics and to view themselves from the perspectives of best and higher parts of self. They then perform better, typically doing more than what is expected of them, because they perform work that is meaningful to them.

7.4.2.2 Workplace counselling and/or coaching

The findings may be further collated into a Diagnostic Framework for Developing Authenticity (DFDA) in a male-dominated work environment (table 7.2). Applied to help diagnose the challenges or stressors women may face in their world of work, the diagnostic framework serves as a structure within which to apply the Framework for Developing Authenticity (FDA).

In the diagnostic framework the paramount need is to develop authenticity. Authenticity work (application of the FDA) facilitates the development of best-self characteristics and associated skills, for the purpose(s) as provided. The associated best-self skills derived, comprise personality insight, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, spiritual intelligence, optimism, positive emotions, self-actualisation and responsible self-expression. The primary outcomes are authenticity, coping and well-being.

Table 7.2: Diagnostic framework for developing authenticity in a male-dominated work environment

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Diagnostic Framework for Developing Authenticity (DFDA)</th></tr>
<tr><th>Need</th><th>Best-self characteristics</th><th>Purpose</th><th>Best-self skills</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">To develop authenticity by learning to cope effectively with the following challenges or stressors:
• Interpersonal differences and conflict potential
• Inherently conflictual nature of job and work environment
• Organisational climate of distrust
• Gendered organisational culture
• Work-life conflict
• Multiple roles</td><td>Becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics</td><td>• To gain insight into intra-and interpersonal processes
• To deal effectively with emotional demands posed to self
• To choose mindful living over a mindless one</td><td>Personality insight (e.g., positive self-concept and internal locus of control)
Emotional intelligence
Mindfulness</td><td rowspan="5">Authenticity
Coping
Well-being</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reconnecting to a higher power</td><td>• To develop awareness of the presence of a higher power
• To view best-self from a spiritual identity perspective
• To tap into one’s source of strength and energy</td><td>Spiritual intelligence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Returning to a more optimistic orientation to life</td><td>• To adopt a positive way of being
• To envision a best possible life story</td><td>Optimism
Positive emotions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Making a meaningful contribution</td><td>To find one’s unique purpose and meaning in career/ life and live it</td><td>Self-actualisation</td></tr>
<tr><td>Practising responsible self-expression</td><td>To learn responsible self-expression</td><td>Responsible self-expression</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="3"><u>Best-self characteristics and skills (above) are developed within the process of</u>:
Authenticity work (FDA) – turning within; recognising possible ways of being; managing perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour; making conscious choices and taking responsible actions; evaluating responses and consequences against best-self standards</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

7.4.2.3 Career counselling and guidance

Relating specifically to career counselling and guidance, Super posits that career is an expression of an individual's self-concept (Savickas et al., 2009). In this study, positive self-concept is also associated with best-self and developing authenticity. Self-concept is shaped through interactions with one's surroundings (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012; Schmader & Sedikides, 2018), but also influences thoughts, emotions, reactions, interactions and coping methods (Bergh, 2009c). Therefore, applying the framework (FDA) in career counselling and guidance may help individuals with the following: to elucidate significant self-characteristics (Amundson et al., 2009); crystallise particular meaningful contributions that a person's being has to offer to an occupation; make career choices that reflect who they are and want to become (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012); choose an occupation and adjusting to it (Sharf, 2010); restore self-concept and regaining self-confidence, which may have been affected negatively by challenges or stressors at work. The framework may also be used to facilitate better coping with colleagues and supervisors and to attend to job stress and challenges (Amundson et al., 2009), through effectively managing the emotional demands of their jobs. Finally, it may improve the management of work and additional life roles (Amundson et al., 2009), and help coping with career transitions (Kidd, 2008; McMahon, Watson & Zietsman, 2018).

7.4.3 Methodological level

In the methodological contribution I provided an audit trail and methodological guide to other studies. Making a methodological contribution by applying related approaches in an integrative and novel way was also a secondary objective. I achieved this objective by integrating the hermeneutic phenomenological and the transpersonal approach, producing foundations of the applied qualitative analytical technique (see Chapter Four, figure 4.1). To understand how participants construct their life stories around experiences (Lindegger, 2006), I analysed data using thematic analysis (Lindegger, 2006; Riessman, 2008) and applied the hermeneutic circle of interpretation throughout (Kafle, 2011). The integration with the

transpersonal approach was necessary and the reasons for this have been thoroughly described according to Anderson (2015).

The research topic required going beyond mere description and identification of themes (Creswell, 2009). Accordingly, I subjected themes to additional complex analysis by interconnecting these into a story line (Creswell, 2009). To derive the framework for developing authenticity, I carried out a conceptual integration of the core themes constructed, indicative particularly of the transpersonal approach. I employed the hermeneutic circle (Laverty, 2003) as self-reflection was key, and incorporated this circle into the interpretive process to produce the best possible interpretations (Kafle, 2011; Kelly, 2006c). The elements of the circle were applied throughout the overall interpretive data analysis (Terre Blanche et al., 2006c). Overall, I followed the data analysis strategy from specific to general qualitative steps (Creswell, 2009). However, I handled these more as interrelated stages as opposed to ordered steps (Creswell, 2009), because exploration of the research phenomenon required flexible strategies. Throughout the research process consideration was given to my preunderstandings (Kelly, 2006c), characteristic of both the hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches. Methodologically, findings imply one perspective of authenticity, given that the study is qualitative, constructive and limited to the context of the study. However, findings provide an in-depth contextualised perspective on developing authenticity.

7.5 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS

This study included female participants from only one out of nine provinces of the Republic of South Africa – the Western Cape. The police officers were from three different stations, while the traffic officers were also from three stations. The total sample size was twelve, comprising six police officers and six traffic officers. The sampling technique (purposive) used is a non-probability technique with inherent weaknesses (Saumure & Given, 2008). It may impose a limitation on the ability to ensure transferability of findings, or ensuring application of interpretations to other groups. Further, I sampled only women because this research aimed to fill a specific gap in research by answering the primary research question: “How do women in a

traditionally male-dominated work context such as law-enforcement, develop authenticity in maintaining their well-being?”

Researcher bias may also be a factor when choosing participants by means of non-probability techniques. However, qualitative research is typically associated with non-random sampling as the purpose is to obtain cases that are information-rich (Durrheim & Painter, 2006). I dealt with bias in the study by acknowledging issues of subjectivity, and by being transparent, honest and clear in describing contexts throughout (Miller, 2008). A limitation may also exist in that all the participants appeared to be Christian, although religion was not a sampling criterion. To deal with this possible limitation I provided evidence that presents universal spiritual values, such as love, as characteristic to best-self and therefore to authentic being.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are rooted in the findings of this study and have implications on various levels (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Hence, I make recommendations with regard to practice and policy, education and training, as well as future research.

7.6.1 Toward practice and policy

The challenges or stressors that women in this research underwent in their male-dominated work environment relate to interpersonal differences and conflict potential, the work context itself and work-life imbalance. The nature of their jobs and work environments is inherently conflictual, they experience the organisational climate as one of distrust, and are subject to gendered organisational cultures. Hence, in the midst of such challenges or stressors employee assistance programmes in their place of work were experienced as having poor reputations with regard to trustworthiness and confidentiality. Before employees can come to feel that they can turn to the employer for coping support, the organisational climate and culture must first be renewed. Therefore, I recommend the following:

- That the necessary expertise be called upon to bring about the required change in organisational culture and organisational climate (Martins & Coetzee, 2009).
- This endeavour must include creating a culture of trust (Van der Walt, 2018) to restore the confidence in employee assistance programmes, through training employees tasked with employee well-being.

To deal with their challenges and stressors, employee coping support programmes should include helping employees to develop authenticity for the purpose of enhancing their well-being. The framework developed here may also be used within Coetzee's diagnostic framework for career services, which addresses issues related to self and adjustment in careers as well (Coetzee, 2018). In Coetzee's framework, underlying principles of various theories and models are used in the counselling process to bring about outcomes such as career adaptability (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Particular best-self characteristics or process steps, within the framework for developing authenticity, may also receive more emphasis depending on the particular career service and client need. I recommend that this may be done by means of the following examples:

- Client needs that require **career counselling** include needing to understand their subjective life perspectives, developing vocational and personal identity, getting clarity on their preferences and career field, and maturing their personalities (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Hence, best-self characteristics may focus on *becoming mindful of self-other difference dynamics,* to gain *personality insight,* as well as *making a meaningful contribution.*
- In **career coaching** where help may be needed to adjust to a promotional position and related problems with coworkers (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011), the following may be focussed on for development: *emotional intelligence, mindfulness* and *responsible self-expression.*
- **Career therapy** helps individuals to: create vocational identities with personal meaning; overcome beliefs that limit who they are as well as possibilities to their careers and lives; adopt attitudes that complement the

self within the greater whole; find meaningful lives by putting their trust in a source bigger than the self (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2012). Here, the application of the entire framework for developing authenticity is ideal.

I further recommend that a policy be developed in which the organisation outline its commitments to attend to employee challenges and stressors. Such policy must be aimed at empowering workers with awareness and knowledge relating to their well-being. However, policies are of no value if not given effect to, and a person or persons must be tasked within an organisation to see to it that policies are implemented.

7.6.2 Education and training

I recommend that education and training be implemented that focus on changing the attitudes and perspectives around women and their abilities in law enforcement, and in male-dominated work environments generally. Various methods may be employed to alter the attitudes others have of females in a male-dominated work setting on cognitive, emotional and behavioural levels. Therefore, developing authenticity in itself may form the foundation of such education and training, for this study found that we understand others better by understanding ourselves first. Naturally, such personal developmental work is bound to tap psychological constructs along the way, and workplace problems are typically dealt with by the employee assistance leg of the human resources department. Hence, individuals tasked with attending to employee and organisational well-being should also be educated and trained, so that they are able to distinguish which employee problems require attention that fall outside their competencies, and require services by an appropriately registered professional. In these instances, they should be able to make the necessary referrals. Training in ethical issues will be beneficial, such as confidentiality when it comes to helping employees through employee assistance programs.

7.6.3 Research possibilities

Recalling the scope and limitations of this study, I recommend that future research

may utilise a bigger sample size. Future research can allow for the inclusion of female participants from stations in more provinces, to enhance transferability of findings. In this research, although religion was not part of the selection criteria, the participants turned out to be of Christian faith. Religion may be made a sampling criterion so as to explore the influence of various religions – or even no particular religion – on developing authenticity. Purposely including different religions in future research may broaden findings pertaining to, for example, the source of strength and energy, in relation to developing authenticity. The study may also be expanded upon and/or replicated by testing the framework in other male-dominated work environments, in environments other that male-dominated ones and to life situations in general. The framework itself may be expanded on. Other application areas may be explored within I/O psychology, as well as psychology in general. Finally, the sample only included women as mentioned under the limitations. The study makes a contribution to our perceptions of authenticity and how authenticity is about becoming your best-self. For women, this may require greater levels of self-regulation and introspection than for men in male-dominated work environments. Hence, it is recommended that future research could include men, as such comparative work could assist us in finding answers to gender differences, especially in contexts where women are underrepresented.

7.7 CLOSING REFLECTIONS

It is a good thing that I did not realise what I was in for when I embarked on this study – as with most things in life requiring much effort and dedication. However, everything was worth it in the end. At times I reached a point where I had to abandon the expectation of reaching an end. Not because I did not want to finish, but because it became clear that I had to surrender to the research process myself. I made my plans and set my deadlines for certain tasks as best and responsibly as I could. However, there were also things that needed to happen in their own time. These included participants changing scheduled interviews, and issues related to making meaning of their experiences. At times when I found it challenging to make meaning, it required from me a combination of letting go and patiently trusting that meaning will come, which eventually allowed things to be revealed to me. Most of all, I had to

surrender to the process because it involved my own development and transformation. A question that I asked myself during this research was: 'Why then, do I act contrary to best-self at times?' I act contrary to best-self when the choices and actions I take are without awareness and intention. Further, when my focus is misdirected – directed at any one other than myself – I run the risk of moving out of self. In these instances, I expect that somebody else should think, feel or do something so that I can feel good about whatever aspect of myself. Hence, from possibilities and envisioning things alone come nothing, for at some time I must bring these into the here and now. Then, I must know how to do so emotionally, cognitively and spiritually. These aspects are also exactly why simply telling people to just do or stop doing this or that, or to just be positive, will not work for everybody. Not everybody knows *how* to become positive and *how* to develop authenticity.

I feel that I succeed most in developing authenticity when my notion of time disappears, so that I just *am* – when past and future move toward each other and become the present, so that possibilities become the here and now. I must live my intended outcome – with regard to thoughts, emotions and behaviour – in the present. This idea may not even make sense, but it makes most sense to me over festive seasons. The season might be over. Nonetheless, what a lovely "standard" to recall in times of need – in terms of bringing into the present those well-being thoughts, feelings and emotions. Throughout the season one experienced a lot of feel good emotions such as optimism, joy, relaxation, love and peace. One could also sense similar energies from others, because most people were eagerly awaiting and expecting something good. For some people such feelings may have been related to their anticipation of the birth of Jesus. For others it may have been the expectation of receiving gifts – whatever brought about this love and loveliness all around. Point is, most of us felt this way even before that, which we have been waiting for, had arrived. We already felt how we wanted to feel once that moment arrived because we brought the future into the present. What an amazing human ability! My hope is that I may create the best-self I intend to see for myself with such trusting expectation that I may express my authentic self at each moment in the here and now.

7.8 FINAL CONCLUSION

This chapter brought the study to a conclusion. I explained how I achieved the study's primary and secondary objectives, and elaborated on the significance of the findings. I discussed the contributions and implications on theoretical, practical and methodological levels. In this study I integrated hermeneutic phenomenological and transpersonal approaches, for the purpose of fulfilling the need to understand how women in law enforcement construct their developing authenticity, as an aspect of coping and maintaining their well-being. These approaches allowed me to then create a framework for developing authenticity, to enhance their well-being. The limitations that I encountered during the study were also explained, and I provided recommendations pertaining to practice, to policy, education and training, and for future research. I engaged in closing reflections, and this research has been an amazing and fulfilling journey. This exploration contributed tremendously to my personal and professional development. I am thankful to my supervisor for the support, guidance and patience – just the special way in which she dealt with me. I thank all the women who shared their experiences with me. Also, I am so thankful to everyone who has gone before me and from whom I could draw knowledge and insight, also as reflected in the references. I trust that women in a male-dominated work environment – and anyone who may find it valuable – may benefit from the contributions made by this research. Finally, I thank the examiners who made themselves available to be part of this doctorate journey.

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Annexure A: Ethical clearance

UNISA university of south africa

CEMS/IOP RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

4 November 2016

Ref #: 2016_CEMS/IOP_085
Student #: 42750830
Staff #: N/A

Dear Rochelle Dorothy Jacobs;

Decision: Ethics approval

Address: 28 Beer Street,
Urbanville,
George,
6530

Cell no: 078 106 3309
E-mail: Sel.Littlerock@gmail.com

Supervisor: Prof Antoni Barnard **Co-supervisor: N/A**

Proposal: Developing authenticity: a framework to enhance women's well-being in male-dominated work environments

Qualification: **Postgraduate degree**/Non-degree output/Commissioned research

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the CEMS/IOP Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research.

The resubmitted documentation was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the CEMS/IOP on 4 November 2016.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

1) *The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.*
2) *Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the CEMS/IOP Ethics Review Committee.*
3) *An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.*

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4) *The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.*

Note:
The reference number ***2016_CEMS/IOP_085*** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the CEMS/IOP RERC.*

Kind regards,

Dr Sonja Grobler
Chair: IOP Research Ethics Committee
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Annexure B: Participant information sheet and informed consent form

Dear Prospective Participant

Aim/Purpose of the study:
This research aims to develop a framework toward becoming authentic, by exploring how women's experiences of authenticity facilitate their well-being in a male-dominated work environment. The study intends to enhance the coping capacity & well-being of women.

Data collection methods and usage:
Interviews recorded digitally and transcribed for analysis. The researcher records her observations during interviews and the influence of her participation in a journal. Data to be used in analysis required to produce a thesis, for the publishing of journal articles, and/or conference proceedings.

The nature of participation:
Participation takes the form of narrative interviews, conducted by the researcher – a minimum of two interviews per participant, including for clarification, verification, etc.

Withdrawal from the study:
Participation is voluntary, and there is no obligation to consent to participation. Participation requires you to sign a written consent form, and you may withdraw without reason at any stage.

Potential benefits of participation:
You will share your experiences of being a woman as confronted by challenges posed in a male-dominated work environment. This will enable the researcher to fulfil the aim of the research described, to inform well-being interventions as well as career counselling interventions toward work adjustment.

Anticipated inconvenience to participant:
No potential harm or evident risks/inconvenience/discomfort is anticipated as a result of the study.

Confidentiality:
No identifying characteristics will be used. Pseudonyms or codes will be used in data, publications, when peer examined, and for other research reporting methods such as a journal article.

Storage and ultimate destroying of information:
The researcher has sole access, ensuring secure storage of digital recordings and hard copies of transcribed data. Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer.

Incentives:

No financial incentive is offered for participation in the research.

Ethical approval:
The study applied for, and ethical clearance was obtained to conduct the research from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Economic and Management Sciences, Unisa.

Findings:
Final research findings will be communicated to the participants by means of a copy of the unpublished thesis, and/or published journal article. Any concerns regarding the study may be directed to the researcher at 078 106 3309 or Sel.Littlerock@gmail.com.

Thank you for taking the time to familiarise yourself with the content of this information sheet, and for your informed consent below.

INFORMED CONSENT

This research is conducted by Rochelle Dorothy Jacobs, as part of the requirements for her DPhil in Psychology, specialisation Industrial & Organisational Psychology at the University of South Africa, and titled *"Developing authenticity: A framework to enhance women's well-being in a male-dominated work environment"*.

I, …… [surname and full name (s)], agree to voluntary undergo the research interviews, and provide the following information:

ID No: ..... File/Code No: .....
Date of birth: ..... Age: .....
Ethnic origin (For research only): .....
Job title: .....
Occupational field: .....
Position/Rank: .....
Number of years in work environment: .....
Contact number: .....

- I have familiarised myself with the content of the information sheet and it has been explained to me.

- I understand that I can choose to withdraw at any time without being penalised by the interviewer in any way, in which case any information that I have supplied will not be used, and any records held relating to my contribution will be destroyed.
- I confirm that the researcher has informed me of the purpose, nature, procedure, potential benefits, anticipated inconvenience of participation, my right to confidentiality, and that no incentives accompany this research.
- I agree to the data usage, data collection methods, and reasons have been explained to me.
- I have been informed that findings of the study will be processed anonymously into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.
- Final research findings will be communicated to the participants by means of a copy of the unpublished thesis, and/or a copy of the journal article.
- I have also been informed that I can expect a minimum of two interviews, with an expected duration of one hour per interview.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions, have been afforded a platform for continued questions for the duration of the study, and am prepared to take part in the study. Finally, the information that I provide will be held securely until the research has been completed and published, after which it will be destroyed.

Signed on this _____ day of _____, 2017

_____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

Annexure C: Interview schedule

The interview involves preparing the participant, asking the questions and ending the interview:

1) PREPARING THE PARTICIPANT

The officer is set at ease and informed of her rights as participant in the study, the reason of the interview, why she was selected, how long the interview is expected to last and that consent must be voluntary.

2) ASKING THE QUESTIONS

The following open-ended questions are posed to the women (main interview):

	Main questions	Possible probing questions
1	How did you become a … how was it when you started, how did your career unfold and what lies ahead…?	What thoughts and emotions do you experience in this environment?
2	Share with me times you find/found it easier to be your best-self at work and about times you find/found it more difficult?	How do thoughts and emotions influence your dealing with challenges?
		So where do/did you find the strength?

3) THE INTERVIEW IS ENDED

The participant is asked if she has anything to add (Kelly, 2006, p. 300). She is reminded of the follow up interview during which her contributions will be verified (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 355).

Annexure D: Confidentiality agreement

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Transcription Services

Developing authenticity:

A framework to enhance women's well-being in a male-dominated work environment

I, _____, transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes and documentation received from [researcher's name] related to [her/his] doctoral study on [title of study]. Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence, the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped interviews, or in any associated documents;
2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by [researcher's name];
3. To store all study-related audiotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession;
4. To return all audiotapes and study-related documents to [researcher's name] in a complete and timely manner.
5. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber's name (printed)
Transcriber's signature
Date

Sourced from:

https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://www.flinders.edu.au/about_research_files/Documents/ebi/human%2520ethics/Transcription%2520Services%2520Confidentiality%2520Agreement%2520Template.doc&ved=2ahUKEwjXlLr27dHeAhWnPOwKHb44BSYQFjABegQICBAB&usg=AOvVaw0R7d1wssiJVMzCCXc6KuDA